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SARDINIA AND THE DUCHIES.

THE King of SARDINIA, acting probably in accordance with the counsels of England, has given the only prudent answer in his power to the offer of the Tuscan Assembly. He promises to second the desire of those who ask to become his subjects, and if, in obedience to the dictates of policy, he points out his inability to adopt a decisive resolution, there is no reserve in the expression of his Italian sympathies and convictions. The same answer will be undoubtedly given to the offers of Parma and of Modena, and although the legal position of Romagna is slightly different from that of the Duchies, the share which MASSIMO D'AZEGLIO has taken in the provisional arrangements of Bologna sufficiently explains the intentions of the Sovereign whom he has so long and faithfully served. The principle of public law which requires the assent of foreign Governments to the union of two neighbouring States, is a necessary consequence of the European system, or of the theory of the balance of power. If Belgium unfortunately desired annexation to France, or Hungary to Russia, all Europe would have a reasonable ground of remonstrance against a measure which would endanger the security and independence of every other State. As the rules of law are necessarily general in their terms, the aggrandizement of Piedmont or of France is formally assumed to be equally an object of jealousy and a pretext for foreign interference. Notwithstanding the unanimous wish of the Italians, the ardent sympathy of all disinterested observers, and the strong opinion of all prudent statesmen, VICTOR EMMANUEL would have put himself in the wrong if he had effected, by his own authority, the justest, the wisest, and the most salutary measure which the present generation is likely to accomplish.

Nevertheless the balance of power is but a means to an end, and the primary object of the territorial arrangements which are now in process of readjustment was to be found in the independence of every sovereign State, and in the establishment of a permanent security against war. Lombardy was given to Austria, and the petty principalities of Italy were assigned to their recent possessors, for the purpose of excluding the formidable domination of France. Experience has shown that the dispositions of Vienna were faulty and mischievous; and there is at least a possibility of instituting, after the lapse of centuries, an indigenous and independent Government in Northern Italy. It is perfectly evident that no other combination can afford so strong a guarantee for peace, inasmuch as Northern Italy, while itself unequal to a contest with France or with Austria, would necessarily keep the ancient rivals apart, and deprive them of any plausible opportunity of collision. Even the bitterest enemies of Italy—the journalists of Paris and Vienna—virtually admit that the proposed kingdom would provide better than any territorial subdivision for the welfare and independence of its subjects. The only reasons against the incorporation of Central Italy into the Piedmontese monarchy are to be found in the animosity or selfish cupidity of foreigners.

It would be unjust to blame Austria too harshly for persevering in a policy which has always been steadily pursued. It is perfectly natural that the victim of an unprovoked attack, baffled and defeated by France, should be eager to disappoint the hostile ambition of Sardinia. The fugitive Dukes were Austrian viceroys, and the Imperial House itself had a contingent reversion to the archducal throne of Tuscany. The Legations, although they nominally belonged to the Pope, were generally occupied by Austrian troops; and all the disputed territories, if they are formed into one considerable State, will, for the first time in three or four centuries, be withdrawn from the control or interference of German potentates. The Legitimist tradi-

tions of METTERNICH are revived to serve as arguments against Italian emancipation. The Austrian Court denies the right of nations to choose their own form of government; and the French Sovereign, who affects to derive his title from the free voice of the people, is called upon to discourage a dangerous revolutionary precedent. The countenance which France affords to the policy of Austria, both by underhand intrigue, and by official invective against Italian patriotism, is much less excusable, although it cannot properly be denounced as unintelligible.

The candidateship of Prince NAPOLEON must by this time have ceased to be serious. The Tuscan people have declared in the face of Europe that their wishes are directed, not to a new provincial dynasty, but to the formation of an independent Italian State. The substitution of a new and unpopular Prince for the banished ruler would be a gratuitous absurdity and injustice. The merits of NAPOLEON III. may be great in the eyes of the Italians, and his power over their destinies justifies the use of complimentary language; but it must be remembered that the liberation of Tuscany and of Central Italy was only an incidental result, collaterally produced by the invasion of Lombardy. The petty Sovereigns departed, by the will of their subjects or of their own accord, without the interference or assistance of a single French soldier. The change of circumstances consisted in the removal of the fear which had been reasonably felt for the Austrians. Italy, which was asked to determine its own destinies, has made a deliberate choice, and there is no reason why its positive determination should not be accepted as conclusive. A *de facto* Government, resulting from a balance of internal and domestic forces, has, according to all modern precedent, a right to be acknowledged, notwithstanding the hereditary claims of banished pretenders. Tuscany, Parma, Modena, and to a certain extent the Legations, are at present independent States. Their amalgamation requires the consent of the Great Powers, but they already occupy a position in which they are entitled to express their wishes.

The opponents of union only desire to throw obstacles in the way of Italian order and independence. It is quite certain that the disappointment of the popular wish will render agitation permanent, and that Piedmont will be forced by an adverse decision to assume the character of a conspirator, even in the absence of any plan of aggrandizement. Whatever may be the nominal rights of a legally independent Tuscany, they can only be secured against Austrian encroachment by the aid of Sardinia, or by the more questionable protection of France. It is doubtful at this moment whether the Central Italian armies are strong enough to withstand any serious attack. The POPE, confiding in the French occupation of Rome, is even now directing his forces against the only portion of Christendom which he is, according to his own theory, at liberty to lay waste with fire and sword. It is even said that the Duke of MODENA hopes, with the aid of a mercenary force, to fight his way back to the little capital which he recently abandoned. A few years of union with Piedmont would create a real Italian army, not less gallant than the force which fought in the late campaign step by step with the picked regiments of the French army.

The English Government may have the opportunity, even without a Congress, of giving the kingdom of Northern Italy a legal position in Europe. Lord JOHN RUSSELL is friendly to the Italian cause, and if he is only consistent with his own principles and feelings, he will scarcely find an opportunity for committing diplomatic blunders. It may be hoped that he will keep a vigilant eye on the representative of England at Florence, and that he will repudiate on every occasion the stupid and prejudiced antipathy which Lord MALMESBURY displayed towards Piedmont. It is in his power to recognise the *de facto* Governments of Central Italy, and even to acquiesce in the union of all the out-

lying territories with Piedmont. The English Minister at Florence, in his leaning to the Grand-Ducal dynasty, consults neither the wishes nor the interests of this country. It is for the FOREIGN SECRETARY to see that a generous policy is not thwarted by the ill-will of subordinate agents. The first step is to establish the independence of the different States. It will afterwards be for the opponents of union to show why kindred and adjacent communities should not combine for self-defence, under the only form which will give them adequate security. England may not be able to counteract the joint efforts of France and Austria in Italy; but one at least of the late belligerents cannot afford to disregard general censure, and if the English Government acts boldly and firmly, the Emperor of the FRENCH may at last—notwithstanding the irritation or jealousy which has just found menacing expression in the *Moniteur*—acquiesce in the solution which, although unwelcome, is least inglorious to himself.

MR. WILSON ON INDIA.

MR. WILSON is about to sail on a voyage of discovery. A very alarming obstacle to the progress of Indian prosperity has presented itself, in the shape of an apparently chronic deficit of eight or ten millions a year. Not only does this formidable fact stand in the way of any future improvement, but, unless it can soon be demolished or evaded, it threatens to crush the fabric of Indian government, as an iceberg might crush a ship which has ventured into too close proximity with its overpowering mass. Mr. WILSON has undertaken the task of cutting a passage through the intricacies of Indian finance, and warding off the destruction which impends over the administration from the weight of constantly accumulating debt. He is sent to India because the most skilful financiers of England are unable to suggest the true course of safety for lack of local knowledge; while the administrators who have hitherto piloted our Eastern Empire have not shown the financial genius without which there is little hope of escaping from a position which, if it lasts, must ultimately prove fatal. In this dilemma it has been rightly judged that the best chance of extrication will be afforded by uniting English financial genius with Indian local experience. This is the task which Mr. WILSON has yet before him; and, if he wished to condemn the policy to which he owes his appointment, he could not do so more emphatically than by professing to see his way through the difficulty before he has commenced the exploration which he is commissioned to make. If the way to set the finances of India in order can be discerned by a spectator in England, the mission of a Chancellor of the Exchequer is a superfluity. Mr. WILSON is probably clear-sighted enough to see that, until he has by investigation on the spot made himself personally familiar with the present condition of Indian finance, he is not in a position to trace the course which is to lead him through the labyrinth. If, in his recent speech at the Cutlers' Feast, he seemed to affect a perfect familiarity with the undiscovered track which it will be his business to explore, the most charitable interpretation is to ascribe his assumption of knowledge to the exigencies of the position in which he found himself. A man who is about to commence an enterprise full of uncertainty ought not to be expected to make a speech about it; and if the hard necessity is forced upon him, the wisest thing he can do is to say as little as possible. A certain Lord of the Admiralty once made a famous speech when on the eve of sending out a fleet to cope with the fortresses of Russia in the Baltic. He reminded his hearers how gloriously NELSON had knocked hostile fleets to pieces, and confidently predicted equal success against the fortifications of Sweaborg and Cronstadt. The ships which were destroyed at the Nile and at Trafalgar, it is true, were wooden, and the forts of Cronstadt were of solid stone, but the principle was the same and the issue could not be different. Sir JAMES GRAHAM got very little glory out of his valiant prediction; and when Mr. WILSON argues, after the same fashion, that, because Free-trade has developed the prosperity of England, the same principle is all that is needed to restore the finances of India, he is comparing two enterprises which have as little in common as the battle of Trafalgar and Sir JAMES GRAHAM's hypothetical siege of Cronstadt. The particle of inapplicable truth which is to be found in Mr. WILSON's speech only makes his comparison the more delusive. If an Arctic explorer were to explain the method by which he hoped to penetrate

through polar seas by saying that the laws of motion and the power of steam were the same in every zone, and that the principle which had navigated his ship from London to Portsmouth would carry him safely from Baffin's Bay to Behring's Straits, he would have quite as much warrant for his confidence as Mr. WILSON has for his assurance that devotion to the principles of Free-trade, and to the interests of the Sheffield cutlers, will suffice to guide him through all the mazes of Indian finance.

It would perhaps have been difficult to select a man better fitted, in many respects, to take charge of the Indian Exchequer than Mr. WILSON. Were it not for some extravagant crotchets on currency matters, he might be pronounced one of the soundest and keenest financiers in the country; and it is well that the magnificent rewards of a first-class Indian office, combined with the glory of attempting an unusually arduous enterprise, are sufficient to counterbalance the attractions which a home career presents to a man who has won his way to a position such as Mr. WILSON has reached. But our confidence in the success of his undertaking would be sadly shaken if we were compelled to accept the Sheffield speech as a genuine exposition of his views. Here is his panacea for all the difficulties of the Indian Treasury:—"We have to follow out a principle which has succeeded in the West, to give it a fair field and that encouragement which consists in the maintenance of law and order, and rely for our success on the prosperity it will confer on the natives. Above all, we have to rely on the intercommunication between our Eastern Empire and this country. We have had experience of Free-trade policy in this country. We know very well that for many years great differences of opinion prevailed as to our financial and commercial policy. We know that amid great difficulties the late Sir ROBERT PEEL undertook the subject, and at last put our finances in a flourishing condition. But that was only done by means of improved fiscal and commercial legislation. I believe the same thing may be done in India."

If the facts of the two cases between which a parallel is thus attempted to be drawn were stated, the reasoning would assume this singular shape:—England was hampered by protective duties, and derived the greater part of her revenue from indirect taxation upon articles of consumption. By repealing some duties and reducing others, Sir ROBERT PEEL largely developed the prosperity of the country, until at length consumption was so increased that the new tariff, after the lapse of some years, proved even more productive than the heavy taxation of the protective system. In India, protective duties have long been almost unknown, and the present alarming deficit has grown under a system which was approximately one of Free-trade. Not a tithe of the revenue of India is derived from the taxation of any article of consumption, with the exception of salt; but almost the entire income of the Government is drawn from the rent of land let for long terms of years, which no increase in the wealth of the natives would materially augment. Therefore, says Mr. WILSON, the policy of repealing protective duties, which increased the proceeds of the English customs and excise, will be equally successful in India, where Protection is unknown, and customs and excise duties furnish only an insignificant fraction of the public revenues. That any measure which promotes free communication and develops the resources of a country will conduce to the prosperity of the inhabitants, is an elementary truth which will not be disputed; and it is possible that, by imposing new taxes instead of removing old ones, Mr. WILSON might succeed in diverting a percentage of any new-found wealth into the public Treasury. The prosecution of public works—not, like the Indian railways, at the risk of the Government, and for the profit of individual speculators, but on the same footing on which a landlord derives a revenue from the improvement of his estate—may do yet more to restore the equilibrium of the Indian balance-sheet. But in indicating Free-trade as the one principle on which he relies, Mr. WILSON has unfortunately stumbled upon a maxim which, however admirable in itself, has little or no relation to the task which he has undertaken. The most hopeful explanation of the crotchet is that the speech took its tone from the atmosphere of Sheffield rather than from that of India, and was only meant to grace the occasion with a general recognition of a truth which, though quite foreign to the matter in hand, was sure to be acceptable to an English audience. A story is told of a famous extempore preacher

who, when asked how he managed to expound the most mysterious texts without a moment's reflection or hesitation, replied, that from whatever point he started, the second sentence of his sermon brought him to "faith," a theme upon which he could dilate for ever. To an experienced Liberal politician the principle of Free-trade affords the same happy means of escaping any difficulty. Let his topic be what it may, a few preliminary flourishes will bring him round to Free-trade, and the rest of his oration is all plain sailing. If, as we are disposed to think, Mr. WILSON only intended to practise this pardonable artifice of rhetoric, we may still indulge the hope that he will go out to India unfettered by any preconceived theory, and prepared to welcome, without prejudice or bias, the light which local experience may throw upon his path.

GERMAN UNION.

THE events of the present year have precipitated a movement in Germany which has been long in preparation. The unanimity and the consistency with which the Italians have proclaimed their conviction that the fusion of a group of small States into one larger State is the only means by which their country can take its proper place in the European commonwealth, have stimulated the inhabitants of Northern Germany to revive their old demand for a consolidation of the petty principalities under the supremacy of Prussia. Circumstances also have definitely shown that, in moments of danger and excitement, all Germany that is not Austrian must look to Prussia for guidance. The duchies and kingdoms which cluster round the borders, or are inserted into the strangely-shaped body, of Prussia, felt that in such a crisis as a war between Austria and France, they were practically absorbed in the great State with which they were connected. It was for Prussia to represent them in the council-chamber and to lead them in the field. It was for Prussia to say when and where war should be made if the sword was to be drawn. It is the earnest wish of a large, a powerful, and an increasing party that this, which has been the temporary policy of Northern Germany in the present year, should be its permanent policy. The advocates of this change desire that Prussia, and Prussia alone, should represent them in diplomacy and in arms. They urge that Germany, as much as Italy, requires the new strength which she will gain if her disjointed members are welded into a single compact body, impelled by the force and guided by the thought of a single ruler. Germany lies between the great military despotisms of France and Russia, and represents principles of government, traditions, belief, and aims, utterly distinct from those of either of her great neighbours. Austria, so far as she is German, is certainly a strong link of connexion between free Germany and the despotic Powers. But, great as is the influence of Austria, it is of a kind which modern changes are apt to impair. She has imposed her policy upon Germany because she was the mistress of tens of thousands of non-German soldiers—because her Emperors were so long Emperors of Germany—because her aristocracy was the cream of the whole German aristocracy—and, finally, because she was Catholic. This last source of influence will be preserved to her among all the Catholic part of the German population, although her union with Rome, under the Concordat, is far too close to suit the tastes of most German Catholics. But every day tends to make her other sources of influence less powerful. The recent war has shown how very wavering is the allegiance of her non-German soldiers; the traditions of the Holy Roman Empire are fast fading away; and the active and rising party in Germany, even if worshipping aristocrats socially, is quite prepared to oppose them politically. The champions of union wish to see a Germany arise which, on whatever terms of friendliness it may stand to Austria, shall represent a policy and embody principles to which Austria is avowedly hostile. The true Germany, they say, is the Germany that wishes to be free. At present this Germany is buried under the incumbent load of a hundred petty, isolated Governments. The time is now come when it must manifest itself, and, by an intimate junction with Prussia, find what it most wants—a single, a worthy, and a sympathetic head.

The feeling which prompts this wish has been growing for nearly half a century. The great service which Germany, if united, might render to Europe was recognised by the establishment of the Federal Diet. But, at the same time that the Federation was set on foot, the different German sovereigns gave a pledge that Constitutions should be accorded to

their States. Times altered—a quarter of a century passed, during which kings were not afraid of their subjects, and the promised Constitutions were denied. The Diet had therefore the effect of instilling into the national mind the sense that union made Germany strong, and yet that a wrong had been done by the administrators of the union actually established. The machinery of the Federation was also singularly cumbrous, and its practical working gave rise to disputes at once frivolous and irritating. To retain the elements of national strength which a union alone could ensure—to devise a form of union more simple and more effective—and, at the same time, to make the united body at least as much a representative of free government as the existing Federation would have been if promises had not been broken—was the dream of the German Liberals in days when any change for the better seemed to belong entirely to the region of dreams. The Revolution of 1848 gave them the opportunity of making any change they pleased. But it found them utterly unprepared. They had never enjoyed the advantages of free discussion. They had had no opportunities of considering what they wanted, and what was possible and how they were to set about beginning a new order of things. When the representatives of the different States met at Erfurt, they were at sea with no precedent to guide them, and with every theory and wish in that crude state in which political theories and wishes are apt to appear before they have been adequately discussed and tested by experience. They could find nothing better to guide them than the great standing precedent of all free government—the English Constitution. They conceived that a united Germany might be arranged on the analogy of the English King, Lords, and Commons. Prussia was to be the perpetual and hereditary head of the Confederation—the minor princes, kings, and dukes were to constitute the Upper House—and representatives freely elected by the inhabitants of each State were to form a body that should parallel the House of Commons. It is needless to point out how absurdly inapplicable the precedent was which they selected. The scheme fell through at once, because the intended head refused to be head. The King of Prussia declined the honour offered him, and the shifting tide of events soon swept away the assembly from which the project had emanated.

Ten years have made the Germans much wiser. They have suffered, they have thought, and they have read. They have been contented to wait until the progress of events should suggest to them a practicable course, and give them a fitting opportunity. This week a meeting of the partisans of union has been held in Eisenach, and a programme has been issued, from which we can gather their present views. There is nothing now like a bad parody of the English Constitution. They do not want anything except to see put into a permanent and recognised form what has already existed temporarily and virtually. They ask that Prussia should represent all non-Austrian Germany in diplomacy, and should have the absolute control of all the military forces of the Union. This would be all. The petty Princes would no longer aspire to a diplomatic and international existence apart from Prussia; and their soldiers would be at the disposal of Prussia, and would be called into active service at such times and in such numbers as Prussia might think proper. But in all their internal administration, the small States would remain exactly as they are. Their Governments would be supreme in all local matters, and it would only be in their relations with Europe that Prussia would supersede them. No interference with the political character of each Government is asked for. If the inhabitants of a small State like to have an absolute Sovereign, or if they cannot get rid of him, there will be nothing to prevent an absolute Sovereign continuing to govern. The promoters of German union all belong to the Liberal party, and are, of course, desirous that the constitutional form prevailing in Prussia should be adopted elsewhere. But they trust to the indirect action which the example of the chief State in a federated group is certain to exercise over the subordinate members. They feel confident that, if freedom prospers in Prussia, it is sure, sooner or later, to make its way in all States connected with Prussia. They therefore carefully abstain from giving grounds for suspecting that the local independence of the minor Sovereigns would be impaired. It is hard to foresee exactly what the real position of these Sovereigns would be if this new scheme of German union were carried out. But the English colonies may perhaps supply an instructive analogy. If we suppose that the governorship of

Canada were made hereditary in a particular family, and that the tenant of the office was treated with sovereign honours, the Governor of Canada would be in a position resembling that destined for the German Dukes and Kings. Every Canadian question would be settled in Canada without England interfering; but the position occupied by Canada towards foreign nations, and the right of commencing and directing warlike operations, would rest with England alone. In like manner, were a German Union formed, Europe would take no more special notice of the little German States than it does of the colonies of England; but the inhabitants of those States would regulate their own affairs as they pleased, and their Princes might get as much homage and as much purple and fine linen out of their subjects as their general temper and tastes would admit.

We cannot pretend to say how far the scheme is ever likely to be carried out, nor, if it were started, what would be its chances of practical success. But its promoters have achieved one indisputable triumph which takes the project out of the region of absolute chimeras. They have secured the adhesion of one of the Princes whose position they propose to affect, and this Prince is by far the most intelligent, cultivated, long-headed, and patriotic Sovereign that rules in any of the small States of Germany. The Duke of SAXE-COBURG, in reply to an address on the subject, has plainly intimated that he is prepared, and even anxious, for some scheme of the sort. The fact that the proposed plan was practically adopted in the perilous crisis of last spring also tells strongly in its behalf; and the Liberal party has now sufficient strength throughout Northern Germany to secure a fair reception for any cause it may espouse. The example of the Duke of SAXE-COBURG is not, indeed, likely to be followed quickly or widely. His fellow Sovereigns cannot all have the same conviction which he may have, that the larger the sphere of operations the greater is the possibility of distinction and influence. But the fact is, that a considerable portion of these small Sovereigns are at this particular time under a considerable pressure, and are well aware that they must do what their subjects wish, if the wish is conveyed in a direct and unmistakable manner. Every week adds strength to the movement for a union of North Germany under Prussia, and every week diminishes the probability that this movement will fade quietly and ineffectually away. The most important question now is, what part will Prussia take? She can either fan the spark into a flame, or keep it smouldering on. Of course the PRINCE REGENT and his advisers are anxious to secure for their country the brilliant position that is offered her. They are not likely to object to Prussia being made the head of Germany. But the Court of Berlin has a great tenderness for the little Sovereigns and their families with whom it is in so many ways bound up, and the REGENT studiously avoids giving any too decided encouragement to the Liberal party. Any disturbance of the peace of Europe might greatly quicken the process; but, if war is averted, all approaches to a scheme for German union like that shadowed out in the Eisenach programme will probably be made very slowly and very gradually.

THE DUTIES OF A METROPOLITAN MEMBER.

MR. OSBORNE was certainly well advised when, some time since, he declined the honour of purchasing a seat for Marylebone. It is bad enough to be a member of Parliament at all. To go through all the dirty work of an election—to toil from Christmas to the dog-days for nothing but glory, and very little of that—to act upon committees, and be vituperated, as a matter of course, by the losing side—to sit out a grand debate of a fortnight without any solution of continuity, and, as the triumphant result, to be sent back to the people to spend a few more thousands, and be dragged through the mire before your hour is come—all this asks almost superhuman endurance. But the common lot of knights and burgesses is happy compared with the fate of the chosen few who are selected to represent the suburban districts of the metropolis. If they show their faces on the hustings or at a public meeting of their supporters, they must come furnished with the record of the divisions in which they have voted, lest some new favourite should expel them as unprofitable servants. In the full tide of Parliamentary business they must always be ready to read and answer the memorials of middle-class patriots and the appeals of self-seeking constituents. If they are suspected of a little plesantry about deputations of local tinkers, they must pro-

test, upon their honour, that local "thinkers" was the genuine phrase. They must swallow without a wry face all the twaddle of suburban demonstrations, and abase their own judgment before the decrees of local vestries. A new device for the torture of these unhappy victims has just been added to their list of grievances. Because the working builders of the metropolis have chosen to engage in a ruinous conflict with their masters, every metropolitan member is expected to join in the cry against "the odious declaration." As there was no question about the legality of combination on either side, the first appeal was judiciously made to Mr. EDWIN JAMES for his opinion on the propriety of the strike. Mr. JAMES has had peculiar opportunities for the study of human nature, and he was not for a moment at a loss to know how to gain the approval of the bricklayers and carpenters among his constituents, without committing himself to any very intelligible principle. He knew the sympathy which might be won by joining in abuse of a common enemy, and, while affecting to reserve his opinion on "the unfortunate difference," he was not at all surprised at the resistance of the men to terms which were "most arbitrary and most unjust." A couple of bouncing epithets were worth a volume of reasoning, and Mr. EDWIN JAMES became straightway the model member.

Having performed, with distinguished success, the arduous task of inducing Mr. EDWIN JAMES to indulge in vituperation for the gratification of his humbler constituents, Mr. POTTER and his friends lost no time in improving their victory. A modest circular was addressed to all the metropolitan members, enclosing the opinion of the learned representative of Marylebone, and gently intimating how much it would gratify a large section of their respective constituents if the members for the million would give in their adhesion to the principle of the strike. Sir JOHN SHELLEY, Mr. AYRTON, and Mr. DUNCOMBE, thought it good policy to send in acquiescent answers; and there was not one among the representatives of the metropolis who had the moral courage to hint that the men were the aggressors in the dispute, or that their demand for ten hours' pay in return for nine hours' work was neither justified by the state of the market nor likely to lead to anything but misery to all who took part in the movement. But a metropolitan member is not required to give sound advice to his constituents. His business is only to gratify his supporters by encouraging them in any absurdity on which they may have set their hearts.

It is rather amusing to observe the different forms of disingenuousness with which the members who answered the circular have managed to make a compromise between their own opinions and the popular cry. Not one of them ventures expressly to justify the men, and Mr. JAMES's sagacious policy of abusing the masters seems to have commended itself at once as the most natural way of escaping from an unpleasant dilemma. Sir JOHN SHELLEY entirely disapproves the conduct of the masters; but, less cautious than Mr. JAMES, he hazards the perilous observation that those who object to combinations ought to set a good example—a remark in which every employer of labour would be willing to concur, not only in word but in practice. So little love have the masters for combination, that nothing short of the necessity of self-preservation ever makes them sink their rivalries and work in union. Their aim is personal independence for each master and each man; and if the mechanics were wise, they would all of them stand by the same principle. If Sir JOHN SHELLEY had condemned a man who knocked down a garrotter on the plea that those who object to violence should set a good example, he would have used an argument precisely similar in logic and honesty to that with which he has condescended to flatter and mislead his constituents. No one, of course, will blame a metropolitan member for this kind of compliance, but it is impossible not to pity them for the rather humiliating work which they are called upon to do. Mr. DUNCOMBE, always adroit, gets out of the scrape with astonishingly little damage. It is true that he has to "concur cordially" in Mr. JAMES's opinion, but he manages to fill the rest of his letter by amplifying the innocent and really true observations that the law of England does not prohibit combinations, and that the Trade Societies are very useful in relieving distress. Perhaps the thought may have crossed his mind that it was a pity to waste in a senseless and hopeless quarrel the funds which would otherwise be devoted to objects of benevolence and humanity. But a member who begins his epistle by expressing the pain with which he has learned that many of his constituents are involved in the dispute, cannot fairly be expected to insult their prejudices

with unpalatable truths. Altogether, Mr. DUNCOMBE has shown himself, as ever, a proficient in the duties of the station which he has so long adorned.

Mr. AYRTON's letter is considerably more ambitious and less successful. He has tried hard to make a case for the men which will stand the test of criticism. He has his precedents and his principles all in order, as neatly as if he were propounding an argument in *banc*; but we hope we are not giving him credit for too much acuteness in surmising that he sees through the fallacies which he offers to his constituents. He begins by presuming that every workman recognises the right of every other workman to make whatever trade agreement he may choose—which is curious enough when 10,000 men are starving merely because they won't say that they acknowledge any right of the kind. But, after presuming that independence is the accepted rule, Mr. AYRTON parades a variety of precedents to show that combination is a superior duty. The Truck Acts and the Factory Acts are interferences with the freedom of contract between master and man, and the Bar is a combination as rigorous as any Trade Society. We are certainly not going to discuss the policy of the two statutes referred to, or the advantages of an exclusive Bar. There are some persons who question the propriety of restriction even in these cases. We are not among the number. But Mr. AYRTON, if he had not represented the Tower Hamlets, would probably have remembered that the most zealous advocates of the Truck and Factory Acts, and the keenest sticklers for the monopoly of the Bar, defend them avowedly as special exceptions to a general rule. To prohibit a species of contract which almost necessarily involves fraud, to put restraints upon the employment of children who are unable to take care of themselves, or even to sustain the tone of a profession which could not become perfectly open without impairing the administration of justice, may be right or wrong, but such examples certainly furnish no argument in favour of the exclusive principle which created the guilds of the Middle Ages, and has engendered the Trades Unions of modern times. Still, it is some concession when a metropolitan member condescends to justify an opinion which his constituents are quite willing to accept in its pure and simple shape; and if Mr. AYRTON has been obliged to deduce his principles from the rare exceptions instead of from the general rule, it must be owned that he could scarcely have found any better argument to support the difficult thesis which he was bound to maintain as part of the suit and service which he owed for his seat.

The encouragement given to men who are doing their best to ruin themselves and their fellows is not the worst part of the affair; and even the humiliation of model members, who are used to the infliction, might not be very serious, were it not for the seed which is sown for the future. A Reform Bill must come sooner or later, and many more operatives will be numbered among the electors. If they can be trusted to vote by the light of their independent judgments, they will be quite as fit to hold the franchise as many who now enjoy it. But if the leaders of Trade Societies are to dictate the votes of their associates, as they already dictate the opinions of their representatives, the acquisition of the franchise by the working classes will be the greatest possible calamity both to themselves and to the country. When free from the seductions and the terrors of Trade Societies, the working men will have sense enough to repudiate the French theory of the organization of labour. But if a knot of scheming Socialists are to hold the proxies of a majority of the electors of the country, reform will really savour more of revolution than of progress. There is some reason, however, to hope that the men will not submit much longer to the dictation of agitators who have already done them so much mischief. The formation of the Anti-Strike Society, as a refuge for those who would not otherwise dare to oppose a popular cry, is one of the best symptoms of the whole struggle. When once fair play is given to the opinions of independent artisans, they will make way against the cause of monopoly as steadily and certainly as the little band of Free-traders grew and prospered till they made converts of the whole country. The men who stand up for independence against the dictation of Societies have a cause as just and right as that of the opponents of the Corn-laws, and need nothing but good organization to obtain as complete a triumph. Let them win that victory within the ranks of their own class, and they will have proved their title to the franchise which no man who is the slave of a Trade Union deserves to possess, or knows how to enjoy.

THE NATIONAL DEBT.

SOME of the officers of the Treasury have been amusing themselves by compiling a tabular history of the National Debt. It is always pleasant to find that public functionaries take sufficient interest in their duties to employ themselves in supererogatory labours connected with their proper business. As a writing-master indulges in flourishes which would be wholly useless to his pupils, an enthusiastic old Treasury clerk delights in explaining that tallies were notched sticks, and that they are not used in the present practice of the Exchequer. All benevolent minds will share the innocent pleasure with which a projector must have hit upon a scheme for combining all the antiquarian knowledge of his official life with a collection of figures extending over several pages, in ten or twelve parallel columns. It was not difficult to find an intelligent member of Parliament to act as publisher by moving for the preconceived return; and accordingly, two years ago, Lord GODERICH induced the House of Commons to order that an account should be made of the National Debt of Great Britain and Ireland, funded and unfunded, &c., with all proper details. Fortunately, no ill-natured member objected that the material part of the return was already printed in twenty different forms, and that the facts were perfectly familiar to all whom they might concern. It is of the essence of a hobby that it should be in itself utterly unprofitable, and the most disinterested amateurs of hobbies are the collectors of arithmetical statistics. It is true that the present Parliamentary paper may incidentally save trouble to historians in want of an appendix, or to members desirous of speaking in a Budget debate. The fortifications in Captain Shandy's bowling-green probably provided seats for his successors in possession, but the primary object of his ravelins and bastions was the satisfaction of his own military zeal. The author or compiler of the National Debt Return, animated by an artistic enthusiasm for his subject, is scarcely responsible for any unforeseen practical application which may possibly result from his labours. The individuality which belongs to a hobby is secured by the repulsiveness of a chaotic mass of figures; and although it is only the antiquarian portion of the work which can be admired as absolutely useless, the tables which record the amount of the Debt in recent years may be defended as wholly superfluous.

Gentle pedantry always loves a joke, and black-letter finance is happily provided with a standing joke of its own. Statutes and Royal Proclamations about the Jews furnish, especially in the original dog-Latin, an inexhaustible fund of harmless chuckling to Exchequer bookworms. It seems that when litigation as to a debt arose between a Christian and a Jew, the law encouraged the spoliation of the infidel as regarded the interest, while it honestly protected the principal. *Judeus probabit cattallum suum, et Christianus lucrum.* The Jew might prove that he had lent a hundred marks, and the Christian, in reducing by three-fourths the stipulated twenty per cent., would offer a wholesome discouragement to usury. If it is asked what the specimens of mediæval humour have to do with the National Debt, the answer must be, that the return was never intended to satisfy vulgar curiosity. Yet it is perhaps unfair to exaggerate the Jew witticism by a marginal note which contains an inaccurate summary of the text. "All his Jews (*Judeos nostros*) pawned "by HENRY III," by no means represent the KING's assignment to his brother, the Earl of CORNWALL, of certain claims on the Jews in security for a loan. The phrase, *assignavimus et tradidimus ei omnes Judeos nostros Anglie*, certainly sounds at first sight arbitrary, if not tyrannical; but it afterwards appears that the Jews were only assigned in payment of 3000 marks due to the KING, in *quibus nobis tenebantur*; and as the entire loan was 5000 marks, it is evident that the transaction merely amounted to the assignment of a definite and liquidated debt. Every trader who pays his creditor by endorsing a bill, practically assigns his Jews, or Christians, as the case may be, in much the same manner, and the record of such a transaction would be neither more nor less illustrative of the National Debt.

From primeval tallies and Jews the fiscal student painfully struggles down to CHARLES I.'s unlucky farmers of the Customs, to CHARLES II.'s closing of the Exchequer, and finally to the establishment of a regular and civilized debt under WILLIAM III. Literary Jacobites and Democrats are in the habit of sneering at the modern system of borrowing as "one of the blessings which we owe to the glorious Revolution," but there is no doubt that an irredeemable funded debt constitutes the most economical method of rendering

the capital of the country available for exceptional necessities of expenditure. While the nominal capital of the debt has been growing to eight hundred millions, the country has risen to the first position in Europe, with a quadrupled population, and with an increase in wealth and revenue almost incalculably great. In many instances the facility of borrowing may undoubtedly have led to extravagance, but no great increase of the public liabilities has ever been incurred except for purposes which would under any circumstances have been deemed indispensable. That unnecessary wars have originated in the cupidity of officers in want of commissions, or of capitalists eager for premiums, is a mere hallucination or fiction of malcontent agitators, without any assignable foundation in history. The National Debt represents a large portion of the cost of the wars of a century and a half, but the wars themselves originated in the policy of statesmen who were, in most instances, urged forward by the general desire of the nation. If the system of funding had been less fully developed, money would almost always have been raised on terms less advantageous to the country. On the other hand, it must be admitted that in the early part of the great French war the proportion of loans to taxation was unduly large. PITT was led into the error by his mistaken anticipation of an early peace, and in the latter part of his administration he publicly confessed his mistake, and made extraordinary efforts to repair it.

MR. DISRAELI'S recent assertion that the Debt was a flea-bite, was, like many of his sayings, an inopportune paradox. The burden on the taxpayer is certainly not intolerable, but its dead weight mischievously affects the whole system of commercial legislation. But for the interest of the Debt, the Customs and Excise might be diminished one-half, with the certainty of a great increase in the trade and consumption of the community. It is a question whether the income of various classes would be more advantageously distributed if fundholders were wholly unknown; but there can be no doubt that artificial limitations on the use of commodities are actual impediments to the prosperity of the country. It is by no means improbable that the approaching reduction in the value of gold may reduce the total amount of the National Debt by a quarter, or even by a half; and in this case, at the cost of enormous suffering to individuals, the general prosperity will be largely promoted.

It has been frequently and justly remarked that the nominal capital of the debt is a mere fiction or form of expression. The sum of 805,078,554*l.*, which duly appears in the accounts as the present total, is neither the actual debt nor the estimated value of the annuities which really form the national liability. If the price of Consols is taken at 96, a reduction of more than thirty millions would be necessary to express the principal corresponding to the debt; and this calculation also, though somewhat nearer the truth, would be inaccurate, arbitrary, and useless. Not a farthing of the so-called debt can be demanded by any creditor, although the annuitants might be compelled to accept the exact sum in full discharge of their claims. The real burden on the finances is the annual charge, amounting for the last year to 28,204,299*l.* After 1860, there will be a considerable reduction from the expiration of the Long Annuities.

The figures which express the annual amount of debt are least unsatisfactory when they are compared with the corresponding sums of forty years ago. In 1816, the interest on the debt was 32,055,350*l.*; down to 1821, it exceeded 30,000,000*l.*; and in 1830, it first sank below 29,000,000*l.* There can be little doubt that the tax-paying power of the nation has doubled itself during the long peace, so that the comparative burden of 1859 is less than half the charge of that of 1816. As the figures have been repeatedly published in newspapers, Parliamentary papers, Annual Registers, and even in formal histories, the only important part of the present return might as well, for all practical purposes, have been spared. But it would be absurd to criticise a gratuitous effort of official ingenuity as if it had been intended to form a serious document. It will amuse a few congenial spirits, as it has probably gratified the compiler; and it will furnish unemployed arithmeticians with abundant materials for sums in multiplication and division, ending in the production of innumerable and utterly useless averages.

REFORM DEMONSTRATIONS IN ESSEX.

ESSEX is famous for its flats. In that rich country of damp and level verdure the traveller may go miles and miles without meeting a single swell. It is not till we get

near Chelmsford that the eye falls on any eminences of note. Nature wears here a livelier aspect. Politicians spring up in every direction; ovations and processions, candidates and agents, chairmen and vice-chairmen arrest the gaze; and, blended with the bleating of the placid flocks, ever and anon is wafted to the ear the tinkle of some distant Reformer. Here the rustic, who drives his team afield, while he never forgets that he is a farmer, remembers also that he is a citizen, and has his political joys and sorrows as well as his agricultural cares. The hard-handed son of labour, when his toil is done, does not disdain to read his paper, drains his flagon to the cause of civil and religious liberty, and clamours for an extension of the franchise. But even enthusiasm in the Ætolia of England is strangely affected by the climate. Eloquence among the East Anglians comes to us divested of its Gorgon terrors. It is gentle, soothing, and mild. Accordingly, when we learn from the columns of the *Times* that the town of Chelmsford last Monday was the scene of much political excitement, we do not expect to read of a wild burst of rockets and illuminations, fiery speeches, and broken heads. When we are told that a banquet had been prepared for MR. WINGFIELD BAKER, the late unsuccessful candidate for South Essex, and that the reception he experienced was most cordial, we know this does not mean that the assembly gave vent improperly to their feelings, or rushed into excesses of emotion. We have too much confidence in the habitual repose of South Essex to believe this. All of course was, as it should be, calm. Even the Committee who organized the proceedings, and who went so far as to offer MR. BAKER a token of their joint regard, presented him with nothing more dangerous than a vote of thanks for his past services and a request that he would not forget to serve them again. In his reply, MR. BAKER does not seem to have been overcome by his agitation, or to have dashed headlong into oratorical imagery. Incendiary figures of speech do not grow in Essex.

There is little that is particularly noticeable in the after-dinner discourses of the three gentlemen who addressed the banquetting electors and non-electors on the topics of the day. In the remarks they offered, there may have been a great deal to cheer, but there was nothing to inebriate. None of them were recklessly original. All three glided into the subject of Reform with quiet placidity, and glided out again without leaving a trace behind, or having sounded its dark and troubled depths. MR. HARDCASTLE, M.P., observed that the working classes ought to possess the franchise. MR. BAKER showed that the franchise ought to be given to the working classes. MR. SUTTON WESTERN proved that the working classes wanted it, and were likely to get it. Essex has not much to say about such a theme, and, when it has said what it has to say once, it has only to say it over again. The managing Committee, taking a hint from farming, appear to have apprehended that an injudicious succession of similar oratorical harvests might exhaust the entire field of discussion. So they went on the principle of rotatory crops. MR. BAKER, whose eloquence is not, apparently, of a rudely cereal character, was put between the heavier M.P.'s. He thus came in, like turnips, between wheat and barley—sweet, but still with no particular flavour, and by no means exhaustive to the soil. Not that MR. HARDCASTLE or MR. WESTERN took an unfair advantage of the arrangement. Maldon and Bury St. Edmunds return no fiery demagogues to Parliament. Their representatives spared the Monarchy and the laws—they left the Constitution on its stalk. They were not bloody-minded in their Liberalism. We have given a very fair analysis of what each speaker said upon the question of Reform; and, considering that not a syllable was breathed on any other subject of public interest, we can only express our admiration of the ingenuity which has spun this out into a column and a half of the daily journals.

A local Reform dinner is a very amusing and instructive spectacle for the public at large when a few firebrands are present to enliven the otherwise tedious proceedings. But a dash of impropriety is certainly wanted to give the thing a flavour. A cracker or two should be let off in the evening, such as MR. ROEBUCK or MR. BERNAL OSBORNE, a foreign Ambassador or an heretical Bishop. Even an indiscreet Secretary of State would be better than nothing. The great Reform demonstration at Chelmsford had none of these. MR. HARDCASTLE was unobjectionable, but he was far from lively, and verged occasionally on the commonplace. MR. BAKER and MR. WESTERN were so unfortunate as not to commit a single extravagance, except that of sending their speeches to the newspapers. So the banquet was a

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little dull for all who were not there. The fact is, that the Long Vacation—that Reign of Terror—has fairly begun. The beneficent goddess who presides over the domain of Dulness, and who has so many dreary votaries, invariably arrives on the political stage towards the close of the session; but it is not till all is over, and Parliament prorogued, that the goddess enters into undisturbed possession of the realm. She now becomes ubiquitous. She remains in town with the editors of the daily papers. She goes down also into the country with the county members. She is present at most political manifestations—she delivers orations at harvest-homes—she takes the chair at agricultural gatherings—she inspires the harangue and soothes the audience of many a Farmer's Friend. Like *Atra Cura* she sits on the crupper of each knight of the shire. How many victims are offered at her shrine! What hecatombs of deluded innocents are immolated in her honour! It is not in vain that she breathes on all her ministers, "the prophetic blessing, be thou dull." M.P. after M.P., avenging himself for the slights of the session upon listeners whom he has absolutely in his power, takes up his parable and pros. He finds that, though no prophet in the House of Commons, he is a prophet in his own county. What an impression he produces on the rural mind! Such a high-minded gentleman—so affable! The worst of it is that his observations now get into the papers, and travel far and wide. At each editorial court, the accredited ambassadors of the goddess whom he serves have nothing else to do than to report them *in extenso*.

It is always best to look the future steadily in the face, and to be prepared. We may regard the speeches at Chelmsford as an indication of what is coming upon us during the next two months. They are the first early indications of that inevitable autumn agitation now about to set in with the fall of the leaf. At this period of the year we must expect heavy showers of eloquence in the provinces, with now and then a thunder-clap in the larger towns. Reporters skim the surface of the country, and the M.P.'s cry is heard at intervals. We do not repine, because we know that this is but the ordinary course of nature. A belief in the moral government of the world explains all. This kind of thing is just as regular as the sun entering the sign of the Scales. We are now in the constellation of the Bore. In September and October, every one who is so inclined takes some opportunity of addressing his countrymen upon things in general. The Legislature is living among its tenantry and shooting over its estate. Many a silent county Hampden now gives tongue, and appears at full length in print. This is a little harmless relaxation for non-speaking members of the House. No evil but is accompanied by a consoling thought. What if they took to speaking in the session?

Unfortunately, this peaceful phase of political life cannot last for ever. Mr. BRIGHT has, indeed, already reminded us that a mild autumn precedes a blustering winter. When the days grow colder and shorter, and the year closes in, Mr. HARDCASTLE and Mr. BAKER will pass away, and less welcome visitants will supply their place. Stormier oratory, fiercer platitudes, blacker prophecies will be heard upon the platform. Hot-blooded and quick-handed mechanics will constitute the audience, instead of phlegmatic farmers or quiet county townspeople. We shall then remember the discontent we felt at the honest sermonizing of good and respectable country gentlemen. We shall confess that their exhortations to their neighbours, if not exciting, were at least harmless. Better the Goddess of Dulness than the Goddess of Sedition.

LORD CANNING ON MISSIONARY PREACHING.

AN ounce of practice is worth a pound of theory. True as this is generally, it is even more specifically true when the theory is couched in vague, sonorous, and imposing language. Such is the language, we will not say of the Exeter Hall school alone, but of many of those who are reasonably dissatisfied with the small progress which Christianity has made in India under British rule. We have heard of the emphatic necessity of a Christian Government giving a preference to Christian men and things. We have been told of the duty of a Christian State to live up to its high responsibilities; and, while disavowing and declining force and compulsion, yet it was—so we were reminded—always bound to favour missionary work by giving it every facility, and freedom, and favour. This was the language on one side; and on the other, the ominous phrase "neutrality in religion" was declared to embody the duty of the Indian Government.

Now it is quite plain that either of these formulæ had—according as people chose to take them—a very good or a very evil sound as well as sense. Neutrality had an ugly look—favouritism was equally offensive. And yet there was nothing to object to, as a mere theory, in the doctrine that the Indian Government, like all other human institutions, ought to be imbued with Christian principles. It is undeniable, however, that the expression "Christian principles" might mean anything or nothing, from downright exclusion and supremacy to a mere supercilious recognition of Christianity; while "neutrality" might cover anything from all but proselytism to something akin to persecution. What we wanted was to know what either party in the argument meant. Of course it was convenient to keep all this, on each side, in the convenient mystery of magniloquence and ambiguity. An occasion has recently occurred, however, which throws a little light on what the two parties to the dispute really propose.

Last autumn it appears that a Mr. STEVENSON, the representative of the American Independent missionaries in the Punjab, made an application to the local authorities for "permission to visit the prisoners in the Government gaols, for the purpose of talking with them, and extending among them the knowledge of Christianity." First let us observe the hazy—and, unless it were American missionaries who were concerned, we should say the Jesuitical and evasive—language of these gentlemen. It is not to preach to the native prisoners that they ask, but to visit them, and to extend the knowledge of Christianity. Though it is plain what is meant, and for what purpose the permission would be used, all that is positively asked is leave to visit the prisoners and to talk about, rather than actively to recommend, Christianity. And further, Mr. STEVENSON requested permission to erect a brickwork platform on the public place for missionary preaching, or to preach in the Government enclosure without, as it seems, stump, tub, pulpit, or platform. The especial reason assigned for wishing to preach within the gaol was that "the opportunity was so good for proclaiming the Gospel among men who, from their circumstances, might be disposed to listen and profit by it." This application was made, in the first instance, to the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. PRINSEP, who forwarded it to Mr. CUST, recommending that it should be complied with. Mr. CUST promptly declined to accede to the request. He forwarded the correspondence, however, to his superior, the Judicial Commissioner of the Punjab, Mr. THORNTON, accompanied with the weighty observation that, though formerly he had been in the habit of admitting missionaries into gaols, yet now he thought that, after the late mutiny, matters had been materially altered, and that the practice could no longer be permitted in the face of native jealousy of compulsory or pretended conversions. Mr. THORNTON seems to have adopted a middle course, pretty to write down, but difficult to bring into practice. He offers a fine and edifying remark on the impropriety of compelling Pagan prisoners to be present at Christian missionary preachings, but claims for the missionaries permission to preach to those who desire to hear. The matter then went before the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir JOHN LAWRENCE, and the Financial Commissioner, Mr. MACLEOD, both of whom came to the conclusion that the missionaries should have "free entry to the gaols and the free exercise of their proper functions." This conclusion was grounded by Mr. MACLEOD on certain reasons which recommended a conclusion very illogical, though couched in a form which looked imposingly syllogistical. Mr. MACLEOD argued that, as all gentlemen were allowed to "visit" the gaol—and it will be remembered that this was all that the missionaries asked—so missionaries, being gentlemen, might visit the gaol. He went on, however, to say that, committed as the Government—unfortunately and improperly, as he suggested—was to the principle of neutrality, he did not see how missionaries could at present visit the gaols with special opportunities of access to the prisoners. If they went, they must go, he seemed to say, like other gentlemen, and converse with the prisoners as they could. Mr. MACLEOD, however, proceeded to argue that for withholding the gospel from the prisoners the Government was gravely responsible, and he doubted whether neutrality was a proper attitude for Christian rulers. Sir JOHN LAWRENCE went even a little further, and argued, not without a certain sophistical neatness, that as everybody visited gaols, so missionaries should not be excluded—thus availing himself of the ambiguity of the useful term "visiting" first employed by the missionaries; and, moreover, as every native of India who

happened to be free was liable to be preached to, so, if the gaols were closed to the natives, they of all Indians would be alone exempted from this liability to hear the gospel. In conclusion, Sir JOHN said that to object to the proposed missionary visits would be not to carry out the principle of neutrality, but to create a special disability. Lord CANNING, in a very distinct and important despatch, disposes at once of the arguments of Sir JOHN LAWRENCE, Mr. MACLEOD, and Mr. THORNTON, and prohibits the entrance of missionaries into gaols, except when especially asked for by a prisoner.

We must say that we are thankful, not only for the decision of Lord CANNING, founded as it is on equity and sound policy, but for the circumstance, trifling as it is, which brings out something of the meaning of neutrality in practice, and shows what is really demanded in the watchword of "government on Christian principles." It comes to this—that neutrality is, after all, only a rigid abstinence from using Government and official influence to attract converts; while the plausible claim that the Government should avow and act upon Christian motives—a claim which nobody of right feeling and religious principle can hesitate to accept, so long as it is confined to words—comes, when reduced to practice, to mean nothing short of an official interference in favour of Christianity which cannot be distinguished from official and all but compulsory proselytism.

As to Sir JOHN LAWRENCE's arguments, we should have thought more highly of them if he had not ventured upon his distinctions and reasons. Had he openly avowed—what no doubt he means—that it is the duty of the Government to throw all its influence into missionary work, we should have known what his view of the future of India was. This is intelligible; and everybody could understand, and in one sense sympathize with, such a manly declaration. But in Sir JOHN's arguments there lurks a subtlety or stupidity which only very religious or very incapable people could be guilty of. Sir JOHN is a very able man; and we can therefore only regret that his religious views blind him to the worthlessness of arguments which in anybody else's mouth would be dishonest. As for the disability supposed to be created by declining the request of the missionaries, Lord CANNING observes, with equal truth and point, that all natives who are free are free to decline to hear the gospel—a freedom which does not exist within a gaol. When a missionary has unrestricted access to a gaol, he must force his ministrations on all the prisoners; as a good missionary he is bound to do this; and within the four walls of a prison it would be absolutely impossible for a prisoner to escape from his visits and preaching. Nor, again, could the missionary in a gaol appear in any other aspect than that of a Government official; and in this way the machinery and power of Government would be directly enlisted for religious and proselytizing purposes. It would be impossible to avert the suspicion in the native mind that people were sent to prison for the mere sake of being preached to. These are Lord CANNING's very proper reasons for excluding missionaries, as such, from Indian gaols.

We will add a single word on another aspect of the question. The real friends of missionary work ought to accept Lord CANNING's decision. Gaol converts, even in England, are very questionable acquisitions to religion; and the proverbial falseness, hypocrisy, and delusion which characterize a prison repentance are acknowledged, and most painfully, by gaol chaplains themselves. A conversion obtained under duress would not confer credit upon Christianity; and Indian prisoners would be less or more than human if they did not feel the stimulant to acceptance of Christianity which must be furnished by the expectation of prison favours and eventual pardon. Here would be at least an inversion of Apostolic practice. St. PETER preached in prison, but it was the gaoler, not the prisoner, who was converted.

THE REPRIEVE OF DR. SMETHURST.

FEW events connected with the ordinary administration of justice have been in every way so significant as the reprieve of Dr. Smethurst. It would, we fear, be affectation to doubt that in this case the Secretary of State has directly overruled the verdict of a jury, and there is only too much reason to believe that, in doing so, he has yielded to an ignorant popular clamour rather than to the weight of any additional evidence. If this is so, the event is, indeed, a most disastrous one—more disastrous by far, if it becomes a precedent, than many others of far greater apparent importance. It is certainly no new thing for a convict to be pardoned upon the ground that his guilt is doubtful; but hitherto it has been the invariable practice of the Secretaries of State for the Home Department to impose upon all applica-

tions for pardon two conditions—first, that pardons should only be granted on the production of fresh evidence, and, secondly, that sufficient cause should be shown for the non-production of such evidence at the trial. We believe that it would be very difficult to mention a single case up to the one before us in which a man was pardoned merely because the Home Secretary took a different view of the evidence from that taken by the jury. If trial by jury is to be maintained, such an interference is most unconstitutional. If it is not to be maintained, the Legislature ought to decide that it should be supplanted, and not a Secretary of State.

This, however, serious as it is, is by no means the most serious part of Dr. Smethurst's case. There seems to be great reason to fear that the Home Office has acted, not upon a conviction based upon the evidence, but upon a vague, and for the most part grossly ignorant, clamour raised by a number of people who wrote to the newspapers—as often as not anonymously. That what is called public opinion should be allowed to have the very slightest weight in a case of this kind is one of the greatest calamities that could befall us. The object of criminal justice is not to gratify the passing inclinations of the majority, but to carry out certain rules. It is its object to put murderers to death, to transport robbers, and to imprison thieves, with the most perfect indifference to the feelings of the community. If criminal law is less than this, it is a plaything, expressing not the profound conviction and fixed purpose of a great nation, but the feelings of sympathy or antipathy entertained by an indefinite and undefinable crowd. No one who had paid reasonable attention to the subject, and who had any adequate notion of the nature of evidence, could read without the most profound contempt the floods of letters which filled the columns of the newspapers on Dr. Smethurst's case; nor could they reflect without disgust upon the fact that, if the crime had been less conspicuous, if the criminal had been a man below the position of a gentleman; and if the trial had taken place when the newspapers were not in want of matter to fill their columns, he might have been hung ten times over without exciting any particular notice. Happening, as he did, to be before the public when they wanted something to talk about, and when the newspapers wanted something to write about, he became a sort of peg for the half-understood commonplaces about the one innocent and the ten guilty men, the difference between probabilities and certainties, and the other nonsense with which ill-educated advocates are in the habit of imposing on Old Bailey juries. Dr. Smethurst owes his safety in no inconsiderable degree to the very same influences which confer an unmerited notoriety on monstrous gooseberries, showers of frogs, and ladies with half-a-dozen children at a birth.

As a specimen of the sort of fustian of which the public was encouraged by the press to relieve itself, we may take a number of the *Morning Star*, published on Saturday last, which—besides reprinting a letter very properly addressed by Dr. Quain to Sergeant Parry, and one published in the *Lancet* by Professor Taylor—contains no less than eight letters addressed to the Editor of the *Star* by "a Chemist," "a Clergyman of the Church," "a British Subject," "a Physician," "a Barrister," "Non-Content," "T. H. B.," and "Edward J. Wood." All of these, with the exception of T. H. B.'s communication, which is sensible enough, are rabidly in favour of the prisoner, and, for the most part, written in the most absurd style. "A Chemist," for instance, says, "I have conversed with many medical men on the subject; many of them think the symptoms were those of disease and not of poison, and all say he ought not to be executed, for if she died of poison, poison ought to have been found in the body." This letter is an excellent illustration of the wretched materials of which people form what they call their opinions—opinions, it must be remembered, which go to make up that total which so many persons wish to be supreme over all our affairs. The "Chemist" thinks Dr. Smethurst ought not to be hung because several doctors think so, and they think so because they think poison should have been found in the woman's body if she died of poison. The feeble, easy-going way in which this gentleman forms his views because somebody gives him one argument on one side of a highly complicated question, is as good an instance of the worthlessness of a vast proportion of what is called opinion as could well be given. If the "Chemist" were cross-examined for half an hour, first by Professor Taylor and then by Mr. Herapath, or by counsel duly instructed by them, he would not know at the end of the time one fiftieth part of his own ignorance, but he would probably have a faint perception that he knew next to nothing about the subject on which he expresses himself.

Another gentleman—a "Physician"—begins as follows:—"I read the whole of the evidence in the case of Dr. Smethurst, and I have also read the letters which have appeared in the principal London papers on the subject since his conviction. I have conversed with some scores of scientific men, and I think I may venture to say that, were a canvass made of public opinion, at least three-fourths would be found to express a firm belief in the innocence of the unfortunate man." This commencement is a fair specimen of the average mental calibre of the believers in "public opinion" who are so numerous in the present day. The writer assumes that every one has an opinion on the case, and that three out of four have one particular opinion, and he seems to imply that all these opinions ought to be of about equal importance. The difference between the solemn conviction of twelve sworn judges trying a case of life and death, and

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rigorously forced to attend to the evidence for five days together, and the loose impression of a man who reads a newspaper to satisfy his curiosity, never seems to occur to his mind. "Public opinion" thinks so and so, and public opinion ought to prevail against the judge and the jury. The grounds on which this accurate gentleman proceeds are enough to show the worthlessness of his opinion. "I read the whole of the evidence," he says. This is untrue. The whole of the evidence was not published, and could not be read. Very material parts of it were kept back, and even if it had been published, did he see the witnesses and compare their demeanour? If not, he has no right to a positive opinion. "I have conversed with some scores of scientific men." How many scores? Does the "Physician" mean to say that he knows sixty men who can fairly be called scientific, and that he talked over the matter with each of them? If so, he must have been a most intolerable social evil. After the "Physician" comes a "Barrister," whose letter contains some sense, mixed with, or rather drowned in, a flood of fustian. He begins by asking, "In the name of all Englishmen, what tribunal is it which is now sitting in judgment on Dr. Smethurst?" and, after much foolish abuse of the Home Office proceedings, he ends by saying that the Crown ought to have granted a reprieve and a full pardon. In other words, he blames the Government, first for inquiring whether or not they should reprieve the prisoner, and, secondly, for not relieving him without inquiry. This logical gentleman dates his letter from 4, Elm-court, Temple—a most improper proceeding, as he may seriously injure the other gentlemen who have chambers there. He had a perfect right to expose himself, but no right at all to expose the inhabitants of the house in which he lives to indiscriminate ridicule. The learned professions are all represented in the paper before us, but the Church comes off worst of the three. A "Clergyman" contributes a letter so intolerably absurd and insolent that we extract it in full:—

To the Editor of the "Star."

SIR,—I believe Dr. Smethurst to be innocent of the crime of murder. I hold that he has not had a fair trial. I infer that the jury were too ignorant to sift the evidence, or ascertain its real value; and, as regards the judge, I will only say that I shall urge my representative in Parliament to bring the matter before the House of Commons, with a view to the removal of this unjust, incompetent gentleman—a partisan, not a holder of the balances, at the late trial. Is it not true, by the way, sir, that this Baron Pollock is a dabbler in chemistry himself? If so, we are all aware how dangerous a thing is "a (very) little knowledge."

A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH.

A man who ought to warn his congregation against presumption, malice, and uncharitable judgment should have been the last person to accuse the judge and jury of injustice and incompetence.

We have noticed these letters, not for their merits, but because they form a fair sample of the worthlessness of what is called public opinion in the administration of justice. Public sentiment ought, no doubt, to be consulted in reference to matters of conduct, though it may easily be overvalued even then; but, in reference to matters of fact, it is simply irrelevant, and to allow it any weight at all in the administration of criminal justice would be the greatest evil which could befall this country. It would be the first step towards that intolerable licentiousness and insubordination which displayed themselves in their most revolting colours in the trial of Mr. Sickles. That wretched despotism, which is not even grand—the despotism of a mob—is the great danger of all modern States. It forms one branch of an alternative, of which Imperialism is the other. To set at naught the conclusions of a jury—a legally constituted authority—in compliance with the newspapers, is the first step towards its recognition and encouragement.

THE ART OF LETTER-WRITING.

IT is the great principle of the present day to get everything in the least disagreeable or fatiguing done for you. To be saved all trouble and all thought is the great aim of a hundred modern improvements. Nurses no longer dandle children—babies are jumped in a baby-jumper. Nurses no longer carry their charges—they merely wheel them in handsome little perambulators into the sunniest part of the park, and retire themselves into the shade to do their *broderie*. Chairs are made to hold the sitter's book, and turn as he requires to read the right or the left-hand page. There is a machine for threading needles. There is a machine for rendering needles altogether unnecessary. The bore of visiting is alleviated by ladies sending their maids round in their carriage to drop the requisite pasteboard. Sporting is simplified by purchasing live pheasants at a bird-fancier's, and reselling their dead bodies to a fishmonger. Not only is there *Bradshaw* to tell you the time of your trains, but there are other guides, the object of which is to save you the trouble of understanding *Bradshaw*. More wonderful than all, there are books to tell you exactly what to say whenever you want to write a letter. In the days when mankind was condemned to useless trouble, the first object of a letter was supposed to be to convey the exact wishes and feelings of the writer. But obviously it is a great bore to have to think what your wishes and feelings exactly are. It is much more simple to turn to the index of a little red book, and find a precedent that you have only to transcribe. The exhaustless ingenuity of the modern world has therefore provided men and women with a compendium designed to save them the slightest exercise of thought, and the slightest examination of their actual feelings, whenever they

want to write. The *New Letter Writer* contains an admirable assortment of these "common forms," adapted to the most varied wants, and couched in the neatest and most impressive language. As the writer points out in his preface, it will never do to write in the same style to every one. Tact is required. You must not, as he justly remarks, address an ecclesiastical dignitary in the same language that you would think proper in writing to your boy at school. But it is a shockingly fatiguing thing to acquire tact for yourself, and so the author of the little red book will acquire and exert it for you. He will tell you how to address the Archbishop of Canterbury, and how to scold or encourage your son Jack or Tommy. He places before him mankind in every relation of social life, and anticipates the causes, the tenor, and the expression of every letter that these relations can elicit. A book is worth looking at which pretends, and pretends very successfully, to relieve us all from the necessity of thinking what we have to write and how we are to write it.

Love and matrimony seem to provoke by far the largest amount of letters; or, at any rate, they awaken so many more shades of feeling, and seem so much more important than the other ordinary transactions of life, that the author has to take special pains to prevent the wish to express those feelings adequately from being the source of even temporary annoyance. Every turn and twist of a love affair is provided for. There is a letter from a gentleman who has only had the pleasure of meeting his idol at one tea-party. There is another from a lover who has known his beloved from her cradle. There is even one from a tradesman to a lady whom he has never spoken to, and has only seen once at a theatre. "I persuade myself," says the letter-writer, "that when you remember where you sat last night at the playhouse, you will not need to be told that this comes from the person who was just before you." This evidently indicates that the writer must have endured the labour of turning slap round to stare at his charmer during the greater part of the performance. Perhaps modern luxury will some day attain the pitch of sending a deputy to stare for you. Then there is a letter from the good sort of young man who writes first to Papa, and ends by saying, "I assure you, honestly, that I have not as yet endeavoured to win her affections, for fear it might be repugnant to a father's will;" and there is the naughty young man who proposes a clandestine interview. The different feelings which such a proposal might awaken are carefully provided for. There is one answer from a stern young lady, who replies, "I believe my conduct has never been such as to give you reason to suppose me capable of an act which, in my opinion, is equally incompatible with truth and female propriety." There is another answer from a more melting damsel, who says, "I shall be walking at — at — o'clock, when we shall, perhaps, gain an opportunity of a few minutes' conversation." There are several forms given for breaking off an engagement, of all which we confess, for directness and simplicity, the following seems to us much the best:—"My dear —, with pain I utter it—I must resign all hopes of our future union. Ask me not wherefore; my answer would inflict an additional pang in the breasts of both." Certainly a man could not well give himself less trouble in jilting a woman. There is even a common form for promising a kiss. "I have received your pretty present," writes a *fiancée*, "and will repay you for your kind remembrance of me with a token more acceptable than money." That any two human beings in love with each other should go and look at a little red book before they agree to interchange their little tokens of affection is a wonder of wonders.

Young ladies must be very prudent and wise, and fond of giving good advice, if these letters suit their wants. Almost all the lady-lovers in this compendium throw in a little note-paper lecture to their adorers. They are instructed to check the ardour of their admirers by observing, "Let us not be too hasty in our conclusions; let us not mistake momentary impulse for permanent impression." And the ladies invariably urge the objection of poverty. The more plebeian letter-writer, who is supposed to date from a farm, remarks, "Mother says that they who ride fast never ride long;" while a more educated correspondent rejects her lover by informing him that "Industry has doubtless never been, and never will be, wanting on your part, but the want of patronage and capital will ever hold back the efforts of the most strenuous." There is a grand letter from a female servant to a young journeyman, advising caution, in which the female servant says to the journeyman, in very easy and natural language, "I think that prudence requires some little delay to enable you to realize those means of comfort which you, as well as myself, I am sure would feel the want of. If your love is as true as you profess, it will spur you on to the attainment of them, and you will not regret a slight, but useful delay." Nothing could be a prouder thought for a master and mistress than to reflect that they were the humble instruments of feeding and clothing a young woman who could write in that way. Other difficulties than possible poverty are also foreseen. "Since we were last together," writes a lady correspondent, "you appear to have assumed a taste for fast life, neither natural to your own disposition nor calculated to qualify you for domestic life. Be yourself, my dear —, return to the sound and manly pursuits which have hitherto been your chief study, and abandon a class of society which can only unsettle your disposition and destroy your whole prospects." We fear that there are men whom such a letter, if really sent by a young mistress, would drive in

desperation straight to the gambling-table. Vice would not appear very terrible to them if virtuous love ended in their beloved copying out of a book for their benefit a string of moral remarks in rounded English.

The great triumph, of course, of such a compendium is to provide for the greatest possible number of different cases, and this is often ingeniously done by giving a series of answers to the same letter. We have already alluded to the instance of the two young ladies, one of whom is too proper, and the other only too glad, to meet her lover "by moonlight alone." There are many other examples equally well contrived. There is, for instance, a proposal to a widow, and then the answers which different widows may find it convenient to give. The first, and perhaps the most useful precedent contains an intimation that the widow "has no dislike to entering again into the marriage state." The others are refusals—one because the lady thinks herself too old, and one because she has too tender an attachment to the memory of her late husband. The latter form is perhaps the most likely to be generally adopted. Or a lover at Upper Clapton may receive from a father at Lower Clapton either an answer stating that, if the papa may judge from the manner in which the daughter received the communication from himself, the young man will find "a by no means unwilling listener;" or an announcement that it is the papa's "painful task to return an unfavourable answer." But it is not only in love affairs that these imaginary answers are given. The author knows where the shoe pinches, and is aware that the really difficult letter to write is a reply to an application for a small loan. He therefore very considerably supplies us with no less than five answers from which we may take our choice. One is a handsome affirmative. It gives the writer much pleasure that he "has it in his power to be able to accommodate so old and valued a friend." Another balances the money with nauseous advice:—"Do, my dear fellow, take one piece of friendly advice—never touch paper where money is concerned, unless it be a bank-note." The other three are refusals. There is the terse, apologetic refusal:—"Unhappily, I am at this moment so driven for funds, that I last week was compelled to borrow five pounds to make up my workmen's wages." And there is the elaborate apology:—"While I feel that there is no one whom I should be more willing or prouder to oblige," &c. &c. Lastly, there is the refusal direct:—"I have always made it a principle in life never to borrow or lend money—not even when members of my own family have been concerned." This is a great touch. There is something so admirable, and yet so true to the character of the successful Britisher, in styling the habit of never doing the slightest kindness "a principle in life," that we suspect this precedent is only the transcript of a real letter. If the author really invented this happy expression, he must be a very clever man.

BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

A FEW years ago the interior of the great continents remained unknown to the civilized world. Geographers with elastic consciences managed, from vague report, or by copying the fanciful inventions of their predecessors, to publish maps that were not altogether blanks; but if any one wished for reliable information as to regions in the interior of Asia, of Africa, and of North America, as large as half of Europe, he might search in vain throughout the literature of the last two centuries. We all know what great strides geographical knowledge has made of late years. Though Africa has been the grave of most of its explorers, Barth, Livingstone, and Burton survive to tell us of new countries that they have been the first to penetrate. But a small strip of Central Asia separates the tracks of Atkinson and the Schlagintweits, and before long we may hope that European travellers will reach, through China, that still unknown mountain region—the source of the greatest rivers in the world—as to which the scanty information given by M. Huc has rather stimulated than satisfied the general curiosity.

The obstacles to the progress of geographical knowledge as to these interior recesses of the old continents have been numerous and formidable. Climates mortal to European constitutions, the fanatical zeal of the followers of Mohammed, the jealousy of rulers, not utterly savage, but reckless of human life—these, in addition to the ordinary risks of travel, have made the career of Asiatic and African explorers a perilous one, illustrated by a long roll of those who have fallen in their course. Far less serious difficulties have stood in the path of those who sought to penetrate into the equally little known interior of North America. The climate is peculiarly healthful; the natives, few and widely scattered, though wild and capricious, are not, as a general rule, unfriendly; more than half of the continent belongs to the British Crown, and the remainder to the energetic and restless population of the United States; yet, until very lately, the progress of discovery has been slow and intermittent, and of such results as have been obtained scarce any authentic accounts have been published. Since the finding of gold in California, and the singular migration of the Mormons to the margin of the Salt Desert, the southern part of the continent has become better known. The extreme north, in spite of the rigours of its climate, had already been continually traversed by Arctic explorers, and described by such writers as Mackenzie, Back, Richardson, Simpson, and Rae; but as to the intermediate region—between Lake Superior and the shores of the Pacific,

and from the Upper Missouri to the Northern Saskatchewan—very little trustworthy information has been accessible.

The chief, but not the only, cause of this state of things has been the fact that nearly the whole of this vast territory has been under the control of a company of merchant rulers, whose profits have been derived from the fur trade. We are very far from joining in the clamour that has lately been directed against the Hudson's Bay Company. It has, on the whole, performed tolerably well the duties that arose out of its anomalous position as trustee for the British nation in the government of half a continent. It has maintained peace and some appearance of order, by controlling and directing the more tractable, and by avoiding interference with the more energetic and warlike, of the native tribes. The servants of the Company to whom authority is delegated have been well selected, and have generally shown themselves worthy of the great power which is necessarily entrusted to them. Through these men the natives have been taught to place confidence in their rulers, their coarser vices have been held in restraint, and here and there Christianity and civilization have made some progress amongst them. But the first business of a trading company is to carry on a profitable trade. As the Hudson's Bay Company deal in the skins of the fur-bearing animals, every other consideration has been subordinate to that of securing the preservation, and, if possible, the continued increase of these animals, whose characteristic it is to fly far from the permanent dwellings of man. The state of things most favourable to the success of their trade is to have a thin population, widely spread, with no occupation to relieve them from dependence on the produce of the chase, and without the means of carrying this to a distant market. Such is exactly the condition of the greater part of the Hudson's Bay Territory. It has been no matter of doubtful policy, but a simple necessity of their position, to discourage the immigration of European settlers, the formation of communities employed in agriculture or trade, and the accumulation of wealth, which might open new markets to the Indian hunters. With this end in view, they have thought it expedient to keep as much as possible to themselves all information likely to direct public attention to the natural resources of their territory and to its fitness for settlement. Very few travellers have been through it who were not in the service, or under the control of the Company. Except a few expressions, since retracted, in the book of their able and energetic Governor, Sir George Simpson, scarcely a word has been published which could lead to the suspicion that beyond the great central lakes there are extensive regions fitted to receive and support a vast population.

It was certain, however, that the time must come when the cautious policy of its rulers would cease to preserve from intrusion a territory held mainly through the general ignorance of its natural advantages. As if in obedience to some law of nature, the constant tendency of mankind is to follow the setting sun. From the original settlements on the Atlantic coast and on the lower course of the great rivers population has flowed onward towards the West, until half of the great continent of North America is peopled, in part by the descendants of the first settlers, but still more by the new comers annually carried from Europe. The great inland seas served for awhile as barriers; but they have now become ferries that help on, rather than slacken, the movement. Still the spaces are so vast, and the choice of sites for new centres of industry so various, that many years might have passed before any pressure had been felt against the limits claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company, were it not for the rapid rise of new communities on the Pacific coast, and the need for establishing direct and rapid intercourse with them across the continent. Within the last eighteen months, and since we last referred to the subject in this journal, that need has been greatly increased by the discovery of gold in the district now known as British Columbia. During the same period, political agitation has been proceeding in Canada with the object of annexing to that great province the entire of the Hudson's Bay territory. When we last wrote it was obvious that the time was rapidly approaching when the valleys of the Red River, the Assiniboine, and the Saskatchewan must be freely opened to settlement. We may now safely say that that time has come.

In our former articles we spoke of the expedition under Mr. Palliser, commissioned in 1857 by the Government of Lord Palmerston, at the instance of the Geographical Society, to explore the valley of the Saskatchewan and to ascertain the reality of the reported existence of one or more practicable passes over the Rocky Mountains in British territory—that is to say, north of the forty-ninth parallel of latitude—and between that boundary and the pass usually taken by the Hudson's Bay traders, lying between the two great snowy mountains—Mount Brown and Mount Hooker. A few weeks after Mr. Palliser's party had started for the Far West, the Canadian Government sent out another expedition with the more limited, but very important, object of exploring the country between Lake Superior and the Red River settlement. This tract of rock and water, lying just half way between the mouth of the St. Lawrence and the Rocky Mountains, is the great obstacle to the advance towards the west of the people of British America. The Hudson's Bay Company have held their eyes fixed upon it as a secure intrenchment which was to keep out the dreaded influx of British population—not seeing that on the south side of the Great Lakes, through the American territory, their flank has been turned, and that even if no British settler should ever cross the swamps beyond Rainy Lake, they were certain to receive other less desirable

visitors from the unruly population that precedes the regular course of settlement in the Far West of the United States. To maintain across the continent a British population able to reconcile freedom and order in their institutions, is an object in which the home country, Canada, and, properly speaking, the whole world, are interested. It is well that the people of Canada should be alive to its importance and willing to aid in realizing it. The notion of uniting the future population of the Saskatchewan in a single State, to be represented in the same legislature with Quebec and Montreal, is, we are quite sure, a mistaken one; but the mistake is one which will soon be apparent, and which may readily be corrected when those concerned have found it out.

Few of our readers can feel much interest in the controversy, long since raised, often renewed, and of which the Hudson's Bay Company have prudently avoided to seek a categorical solution, as to the extent of their rights, whether derived from their original charter, or from the subsequent acts of the Imperial Legislature. It is enough to know that they are ready to retire from all those parts of their territory that may be required for settlement, and that the only practical questions likely to arise regard the compensation which they may claim for property left in the ceded districts, and the conditions under which their trade shall in future be exercised. The Company will no doubt seek the most favourable conditions that they can devise, and their opponents, especially in Canada, will concede as little as is possible. What is of real and immediate interest is to know what opportunities and inducements there are for establishing settlements in the country now held by the Company, and by what means such settlements can be brought into communication with the rest of the Empire. We propose to give our readers a summary of the results obtained by the two recent expeditions in regard to the country between Lake Superior and the Red River, as well as a sketch of the more important geographical discoveries made by Mr. Palliser and his companions.

The basin of the St. Lawrence, including the five great lakes whose waters are now open to the commerce of Canada and the Northern States of the Union, is bounded to the westward by the greatest of them all, Lake Superior. Three hundred and eighty miles long, from Sault Ste. Marie, where its waters are discharged through the River St. Mary into Lake Huron, to the new American settlement at Superior City, where the lake gradually narrows towards its western extremity—and at its utmost width nearly half as far from north to south—this great inland sea receives but short and comparatively unimportant streams. To the north and west it is inclosed by a girdle of crystalline and metamorphic rocks rising into low dome-shaped hills that extend at intervals to a great distance towards Hudson's Bay and the Arctic Sea. The large number of lakes, most of them but a few fathoms deep, that cover the whole face of this, which, from the frequent recurrence of that rock, we may call the Granitic region, are formed in the hollows of an undulating rocky plateau composed of materials so hard that the streams are unable to cut deep channels in the surface. Rising in successive terraces rather steeply from the lake to the watershed, or so-called Height of Land, about nine hundred feet above its surface, and distant from its shores some fifty or sixty miles, this plateau sinks more slowly and in longer terraces northward towards Hudson's Bay, and westwards towards Lake Winnipeg, the nearest of the great internal lakes of British America. The convex surfaces of rock are everywhere scored by the tracks of floating ice left upon them during that recent geological period when the north of America lay at the bottom of a shallow ocean over which fleets of tall bergs and frequent masses of floe ice drifted from the polar lands towards the south. The same agency and the subsequent action of rivers has deposited drift and alluvial soil here and there on the rocky terraces and hollows of the Granitic region, thus forming cultivable oases in the midst of its sterile swamps whereon food may be raised for human use.

But two routes have been used by white men in travelling westward from Lake Superior. One of them, which was extensively employed by the North-west Company when they attempted to contest the monopoly of the fur-trade exercised by the Hudson's Bay Company, lay for a distance of from 300 to 400 miles along the line which was subsequently agreed upon as the boundary between the United States and British America. The terminus on the shore of Lake Superior is at the mouth of a stream called Pigeon River, which gives its name to this route. The other line, which alone has been in use for the last twenty or thirty years, starts from Fort William, the chief trading post of the Hudson's Bay Company on Lake Superior, and making a wide circuit to the northward, through a succession of lakes connected together by shallow streams, joins the Pigeon River route a few miles east of Rainy Lake. The mode of travelling by both routes is the same. Two sorts of boats are in use—the larger called "north canoes," thirty feet long, and carrying four or five tons; the others, "small canoes," very light, and carrying but three persons. On lakes and streams of moderate current paddles are employed; over shallows and rapids the canoes are forced along with poles; and where this is no longer possible, the entire contents are carried on men's shoulders, and then the canoe itself is transported in the same manner. The labour of these "portages" is most severe; and it is evident that so long as they form a necessary portion of the journey, the road to the Far West cannot be said to have been opened to ordinary travellers. By the ordinary

route, known as the Dog Lake route, there are fifty portages between Fort William and Lake Winnipeg, and by the Pigeon River route, six or seven more; besides which, there are on each route a number of places where the baggage must be carried, although the empty canoes may be towed over shoals or difficult rapids.

The Pigeon River line is from forty to fifty miles shorter than that by Dog Lake, but this advantage is partly counterbalanced by the serious labour and difficulty arising from the nature of the country near the mouth of Pigeon River. That river falls about one hundred and fifty feet in the latter part of its course, passing between steep, rocky banks, and it was, therefore, found necessary to avoid the river altogether, and to make a single portage of more than eight miles in length. Bad as this alternative is, the difficulty would be much greater if the portage were made on the British side of Pigeon River; and, in practice, it has been necessary to keep upon American territory not only at this, "The Grand Portage," but also in several of the portages subsequently encountered.

The whole distance from Lake Superior to Red River by the Dog Lake route may be divided into three portions, which were carefully measured by Mr. Napier, the engineer of the Canadian expedition, as follows:—

Lake Superior to Rainy Lake	335 miles.
East end of Rainy Lake to north end of Lake of the Woods	176 "
Rat Portage by Lake Winnipeg to Fort Garry	237 "
Total	647 miles.

The first portion, leading up to the "Height of Land," and from thence to Rainy Lake, is the most difficult and laborious part of the whole journey. So far as we yet know, the prospect of crossing the upper part of the granitic plateau, either by a continuous land road or by a water channel, seems hopeless without an amount of expenditure greater than that of the most costly works hitherto achieved. A recent traveller thus speaks of it:—"In this country, there is neither continuous land nor continuous water; any attempt, therefore, to construct a road would be met by numberless lakes and straits, some of them of great width and depth, while the rocky structure of the country would preclude the possibility of rendering the water communication continuous." The second portion of the route is much the easiest; with a single break at the Chaudière Falls, on Rainy River, near which there is a large extent of land fit for cultivation, this section of the line is all practicable for small steamers. The canoe line from Lake of the Woods to Red River, forming the third section of the route, is very circuitous, indeed, more than double the direct distance. The valley of the Winnipeg river, which it follows for one hundred and fifty miles, is rough and barren, and the river broken into dangerous falls and rapids, requiring not less than twenty-four portages. There is reason to think that this portion of the journey may, without unreasonable cost or difficulty, be replaced by a land road.

If regard were had to nothing beside the natural features of the country there could be no doubt but that the proper line for communication between the Canadian lakes and the Red River, and from thence to the Saskatchewan, should start from the extreme western end of Lake Superior. This seems to lie south and west of the troublesome granitic region. The difficulties to be overcome in opening intercourse with the Upper Mississippi are comparatively trifling, and from thence to Red River, during the season in which steamers could ply, they would not be much more serious. But the objections to relying upon a line of road through American territory have been equally felt by all parties in this country and in Canada; and the Canadian politicians who have been demanding the annexation of all British America to their own province have felt more than others the necessity for showing that nature has set no insurmountable barrier beyond the north-western shore of Lake Superior to the future extension of Canada. Insurmountable the barrier is not, but very formidable it certainly is; and we have been more than ever persuaded that it is so by a careful study of the papers lately laid before Parliament, giving an account of the proceedings of the Canadian expedition to which we shall refer in a future article.

THE WOOLWICH FLOGGING CASE.

IF anything is fun in the country, any subject is a godsend to the newspapers in the autumn season. A very bad subject is almost as useful as a very good one; because, in a bad subject, and especially if it is badly treated, there is always a chance of a contradiction, and then one of the neat-handed writers of the daily press comes in for his innings. After a great blunder, he has an opportunity of writing a thoroughly clever article, which does two things at the same time—unsays the former article, and, at the same time, while taking new ground, affects to prove that the previous one was all right. The gain to the newspapers and to the public is that here are two articles out of one subject. Nor does the transaction stop here. Any subject out of which two articles can be got generally suggests a cloud of letters—letters generate articles—and the process of production and reproduction out of an original fiction or mis-statement goes on till Parliament meets. And, on the whole, as we must have three leaders and eight pages a day in the *Times*, it is as well to have this sort of thing—for we generally get the truth at last—as to fill whole newspapers with the Marriage on 300*l.* a year Question

or the great Dinner Question. At all events, anything which shuts out "light articles" on St. Partridge is a social gain.

An illustration of what we mean occurred last week. The subject of military flogging has turned up—it is a mere accident that it was not the equally popular one of flogging in public schools. Saturday's *Times* presented a choice of subjects for a leader, in the Military Intelligence from Woolwich and that very ridiculous correspondence about the Cathedral School at Canterbury. The really ingenious thing would have been to put the two cases together, and to suggest—what would have been just as popular and quite as true as what was said—that the military tyrants always approve of flogging except in the case of their own children. Here would have been a new raw; and a very edifying column might have been written to show, from the solitary example of Lieutenant Vouden at Canterbury, artfully connected with that of Colonel Talbot of Woolwich, that one of the two, taking example from the other, should be either a stricter disciplinarian at home, or a laxer one on a court-martial. But this chance was lost, and a leader was founded on the story of a flogging supplied by the Woolwich correspondent. This story was very remarkable. A man named Davis, "a young recruit," had been "convicted of simple desertion." He was flogged; and, as is added, *majorem ad invidiam*, to make the matter worse—though it is very hard to see how it exaggerated the enormity of the affair—he was flogged "on the morning after the court-martial." He was dreadfully punished—his back being "covered with a mass of large, red, inflated boils, which bled profusely at every stroke, and reddened the ground under his feet." In other newspapers letters appeared, demanding the name of the medical officer who was present at this "abominable outrage," in order that he might, "with Colonel Talbot, receive the execration of the British public." The text of the Woolwich annalist was accompanied by a gloss in the shape of a leader in the *Times*, which was to this effect—that, although flogging had been almost prohibited in the British army, it was of nearly "daily occurrence" at Woolwich; that Woolwich, being a settled garrison, was a place in which flogging ought never to occur, as it should be strictly reserved as a last resource during active service; and that the cat ought only to be heard of as the punishment for the most degrading and abominable crimes. What was protested against was the ordinary use of the lash as a means of maintaining discipline.

Now, it turns out—though, to do the *Times* justice, it did not even allude in its leader to the statement about the back covered with boils, and the gore-stained earth—that the punishment of flogging for desertion is a new experiment, having been only legalized in the Mutiny Act of last session—and that Davis had been guilty not only of "simple desertion," but had deserted twice within a month. Nor was he "a young recruit." Indeed, as flogging is, according to a correspondent of the *Times*, never administered for a first desertion, and as Davis was flogged twice, it would seem that he had deserted three times; and, anyhow, he had been flogged for desertion on the 15th of August, as well as on the 1st of September. Moreover, as to the flogging, it could not have been so frightfully and horribly severe; for though on the second occasion the man roared, and shrieked, and screamed for mercy, yet after the first punishment he had amused himself by a fit of cock-crowing quite parliamentary in effect. The result seems to be, that the particulars given of Davis's punishment were greatly exaggerated—that he was an old offender, rather than a young recruit—and that the punishment of the lash was not only not the rule of the service, but was rather an experiment of a few months old, deliberately resolved upon by Parliament during the last session, and expressly designed to check a particular and very prevalent offence,—that of desertion with re-enlistment. All this being shown, it is clear that the first article was altogether wrong, and that, in point of fact, it was written in sheer ignorance of the clause in the Mutiny Act which awarded flogging as the punishment for desertion. The writer of it, entirely unaware that the cat was the new and exceptional remedy for a military disease which had grown to a portentous magnitude, treated flogging as the ordinary discipline of the army—the fact being that, so far from the Woolwich authorities violating the spirit and intention of the Act passed thirteen years ago (which was the whole gist of the charge made in the first article), Colonel Talbot was only carrying out a new law, not thirteen weeks old. So that the article had positively no meaning. If courts-martial would but be chary in the use of the lash—that is, if the lash were suffered to fall into disuse—then there would be no harm in retaining it, and in Davis's case it certainly ought not to have been used. This was what the *Times* argued on Saturday—an argument it never would have used had the writer been aware of the recent change in the law.

On Wednesday came an official, though anonymous, contradiction—accompanied, however, by an article to show that "we were right all along." This article is really clever. At last, thoroughly informed both of the facts of Davis's case and of the new clause in the Mutiny Act, the leading journal goes on a totally new tack. After running off on the barbarity of the punishment, which had in the interval attracted public notice, but which was not alluded to on Saturday, the writer proceeds in this style:—The lash is bad, because it does not check desertion. Here you see, in spite of all your terrorizing punishment, the crime of desertion in full swing. Flogging does not put a stop to re-enlistment after desertion—it is not only a disgusting exhibition, but it does no

good. According to this version, the thing is an experiment, ordered, perhaps, by Parliament recently, but it has failed—all which is a very different statement and argument from that of Saturday, that flogging is the ordinary discipline of the army.

Here, then, is the great advantage of entire ignorance of a subject. It gives at least an opportunity for two articles in which facts and arguments are fairly divided. Hence results a fallacy which is particularly that of newspapers, and ought to be added to Whately's famous chapter. Taken together, any two articles, one of which explains the other, contain between them both fact and argument; only one article—say last Saturday's—contains a good argument and bad facts, while Wednesday's contains good facts and a bad argument. The *locus pocus* intended—and generally successful—is to mystify the reader's attention, while the conjuror of the pen pretends that his new facts and his old argument, both of which may be separately sound enough, illustrate and support, instead of, as is the case, destroy each other when taken together.

The *Times*' last conclusion is that flogging in the army is bad, because desertion is not stopped—which is much the same thing as if a patient, when he sends for his doctor, were to complain of his physis because he was ill. Whether flogging for desertion will check the offence remains to be seen. We are not convinced of the propriety of the punishment under any circumstances; nor do we say that flogging will check desertion for re-enlistment and its bounty. Our present concern is not so much with flogging in the army as with the way in which the subject has become a newspaper one. The experiment, it seems, is only a few weeks old. The punishment horrifies all who witness its infliction, and it may possibly repress the crime. At any rate, it is too soon to pronounce it to be a failure; or, if any argument is to be raised upon the subject, let it be upon the success or failure of flogging as applied to this specific offence, which is the real question at issue. Let us have no more bunkum talk about flogging in the army generally for military offences. It is easy enough to get up a cry against military tyranny, and Mr. Bright and his disciples instantly pounce upon the incident as a case against our institutions in general, and that of the army in particular; but when every nerve is to be strained to get our defences in order, it is neither very wise nor very politic to attract public "execration" to a service in which it is not over easy to get recruits at all. But the necessities of the press are superior to the necessities of the country. If the army suffers in public estimation, so much the worse for the army—what is wanted in the long vacation is a spicy subject. Flogging in the army will always interest people—a back streaming with gore, and "reddening the earth," is a telling picture. But the subject is one of overwhelming importance, and too serious for mere literary or oratorical capital. How to check desertion and re-enlistment, and the practice of getting two or three bounties, is a matter too dull and commonplace to write about. It is one of such importance that Parliament has tried to stop this abuse—by which a single deserter is said to have robbed the public to the amount of 80*l.*—by the introduction of flogging. The attempt may succeed or fail; but the offence is so great and so prevalent, and the ordinary rules of the service are so incapable of grappling with it, that the Legislature thought proper to try a new punishment for a new offence. Whether that attempt will stop the practice will depend not only upon the fairness and judgment with which the punishment is administered, but, amongst other things, upon the fairness and judgment with which we estimate the experiment.

A DARING DANCE.

NOTHING is better worth observing than the collateral developments of a national habit of mind. Besides the main outlines of character which are the result of the circumstances in which a nation is placed, and of the end toward which it struggles, there are other inferior characteristics which are none the less expressive of some actual element in its intellectual being, or some past phase in its history. There is a certain mannerism which is engendered by a career, and which it is extremely difficult afterwards to get rid of. A nation, like a class or an individual, acquires professional tricks; and these, though generally vulgar or grotesque to a spectator who looks on in cold blood, assist very materially towards a correct appreciation of taste and feeling. In a country like America, which is far too busy about its business to pay much regard to its manners, and where popular sentiment is so vigorous and enthusiastic, such tricks are sure to be plentiful. One of them is a partiality for feats; and it is easy to see why this should be so. A feat is a convenient, concise way of exemplifying superiority. It brings matters to an issue. When people are disputing on general questions of merit—courage, for instance, or skill, or endurance—any man who goes and does something, and challenges all the world to beat it, has at any rate put the controversy on a good definite footing. It may not be really a satisfactory way of deciding the point in question, but it is eminently intelligible and popular. Now, a controversy of this sort is always present to the American mind. Those feats which sound so amusing on this side of the Atlantic are merely one expression of that spirit of wild adventure, audacious enterprise, and irrepressible resolution to succeed, by which America has fought her way from Colonial insig-

nificance to a place among the Great Powers. She has had her way to make in the world; self-assertion has been a national necessity; she cannot afford to be troubled with any inconvenient modesty. It may be all very well for old countries, with established reputations, to be unobtrusive and reserved; but young people, she knows, must sound their trumpet pretty loud if they mean to get on. So America makes no secret of her merits:—

Si quid honesti est
Jactat et ostendit.

Her existence has been one long struggle to force herself into eminence, and now she seems to have settled permanently into a sort of devil-take-the-hindmost frame of mind, and to be always calculating how she may astonish the stranger. She has been so accustomed to showing cause why she should be reckoned a great nation, that she goes on showing cause long after she has obtained a verdict. Racers which cause a panic in Mr. Day's stables, trotters that think nothing of twenty miles an hour, hotels which would hold a European street, yachts that are to put the aristocratic mariners of Cowes to the blush, the Greek Slave standing amidst the treasures of the Eastern hemisphere with a sort of meek, resolute consciousness that she is the loveliest of her species, and that it was a child of the New World who called her into being, are all expressions of the same determination to make the running in the race of mankind. This young country is so oppressed with a consciousness of power and activity, that she cannot help blustering a little. It would be absurd to be angry with a state of mind so thoroughly appropriate to her circumstances. It is a pleasant symptom of youth—one of the hopeful excesses that promise well for mature years. The attitude which she assumes toward the Old World is half affectionate, half contemptuous. "You may look grave," she says, "and shake your venerable head, and talk about inexperience, and so forth; but, you dear, good old creature, just look at me, how fast I grow, how capably I succeed; and for goodness sake don't try to come over me with any of your stupid, old-fashioned ways of thinking." It is not strange that this sort of feeling should often explode in some extravagance or other. A healthy spirit of rivalry easily degenerates into mere ostentation and bravado. *Αὐτὸ ἀπορρέει* is a capital motto, but in bad hands it may be interpreted into justifying any ridiculous contrivance for arresting attention and making mankind stare.

A performance which took place last month at the Falls of Niagara, and which has since been repeated with sundry additions and improvements, certainly deserves no better name than this. The *Buffalo Courier* gives us an account of a huge crowd that assembled to see a M. Blondin cross the river on a tight rope, with a man on his back. Special steamers, monster excursion trains, and crowds of private carriages had covered the banks for some distance with a dense mass of expectant humanity. To the very last the public was sceptical, and a not unnatural incredulity prevailed as to any one having been found with sufficient faith in M. Blondin's equilibrium to entrust himself to so perilous a post of honour as his shoulders. At length deafening shouts from either bank greeted the appearance of the hero of the day. "He was dressed," we are told, "in silk tights, bare-headed, and had on his feet rough-dressed buckskin shoes." He started alone with his pole, and went through a few preliminary exertions, just to break the ice, and dispel any clouds of apprehension that might be gathering over the mind of his companion. After turning several somersaults backwards and forwards, brandishing one leg in the air, and standing on his head, he discarded his pole and ran along with his hands and feet under the rope, like an ape, to the middle of the river. Here he proceeded to make himself as completely at home as if the Falls of Niagara were a pleasant fiction, and an ample supply of feather beds were awaiting his fall. Now he hung by a leg, now by a hand—now, dropping at full length, he whirled round, "resting his breast on the rope, with arms and legs extended as if in the act of swimming." When he had had enough of this, he returned for his pole, and crossed to the Canada bank of the river, only stopping here and there to relieve his superabundant agility by lying down on the rope, standing on one foot, or by the indulgence of an occasional somersault. The multitude shouted, and the steam engines of the excursion-trains whistled applause, as M. Blondin completed the first portion of his task. In a few moments he reappeared with the man on his back, who appears to have been of a gloomy turn of mind, and not to have taken a cheerful view of the proceedings, as M. Blondin permitted himself none of those saltatory eccentricities which enlivened his first passage. In about three-quarters of an hour both of the performers reached the opposite bank, where, as the *Buffalo Courier* calmly observes, "a good deal of excitement prevailed," and where no doubt M. Blondin received his due meed of honour and congratulation. He may indeed well be proud of his acquirements. He enjoys a superb immunity from the common lot of his species. With what a curious complacency he must regard the vulgar necessities of every-day folk, who turn giddy at crossing a plank, and could not stand on their heads in their own drawing-room to save their very lives! Like the Emperor who said, "Ego sum Rex Romanus et super grammaticam," M. Blondin may boast, "I am the Yankee tumbler, and defy the principles of gravitation." One wonders that the waves of Niagara did not stand congealed with amazement at so daring an infringement of the laws of nature.

There is something half shocking, half comical, in the place

chosen for a performance of this sort—the sentiments which prevailed amidst that vast assembly must have been so extraordinarily different from those which the natural scenery was calculated to inspire. A noble river, sweeping its vast volume of water over a craggy precipice, and dashing with a sound of thunder into the abyss below, must be a sight, one would have thought, to sober and abash the most careless and unromantic spectator. Anybody with a spark of feeling must be awed by so sublime a phenomenon into a sense of his own insignificance, and bow in reverence before the majesty of Nature. The traveller who had gazed upon its simple grandeur must, one would fancy, go away somewhat refined and elevated, with enlarged conceptions and purified tastes. So far, however, from being impressed by it, an American mob chooses it as the scene of a piece of vulgar recklessness, and of about the lowest form of enjoyment which the human mind can degrade itself into relishing. Nature writes her lesson in the sublimest characters, and man sticks up a cross-ropes, and screams with delight and excitement at the antics of a tumbler whose performances gain an additional piquancy from the delicious possibility of some horrible catastrophe. Mr. Buckle has told us that in some countries the human intellect is so overpowered by the immensity of physical phenomena as to be incapable of keeping pace with nations where things are on a less imposing scale. Such a theory is strongly illustrated by performances like M. Blondin's. The Americans, at any rate, have no idea of being crushed by anything so little remarkable as a waterfall. The Niagara may astonish a stranger, a mere uninitiated European, but the Transatlantic understanding is superior to such vulgar influences. M. Blondin, as the representative man of his nation, is ready with his rope and pole, and capers across it as friskily as possible. If nature meant to surprise him, he reckons she has not known her man this time. The water makes a great roar in coming down, certainly, but this plucky little fellow is not a bit frightened, and whistles "Yankee Doodle."

M. Blondin, if upbraided with the character of his exploit, would probably justify himself with *il faut vivre*—a man must make his bread as best he can. If he has to earn it by catering, at the imminent risk of his life, to the vitiated tastes of a mob, still that is many degrees better than starvation. One can only condole with him that his perseverance, activity, and fearlessness should not have found their way into some channel more generally useful, or rather, less decidedly pernicious. It would be difficult to overrate the degree in which the character of a nation is degraded and brutalized by exhibitions of this sort. They are the pleasures of a people who love to be intoxicated with the most violent drugs—whose life is so feverish and whose feelings are so deadened that they can only get the excitement for which they crave out of circumstances which, to more tranquil and susceptible temperaments, are simply frightful and disgusting. We think of the debauched mob that crowded the benches of a Roman amphitheatre, and wonder at the strange fatality that leads a youthful and vigorous nation to abandon itself to the enervating enjoyments of the most corrupt and effete civilizations.

CHURCH'S "HEART OF THE ANDES."

IT does not need a prophet to arise and point to the West in order to proclaim in what direction we may look for a young and vigorous school of art. Those who scan the horizon augur a great art future for America, and we regard with peculiar interest the harbingers of that new school which we anticipate. It would be impossible to predict the direction which it may take, as there are too few works of American artists known in this country to justify any opinion on the subject. We know the reputation gained by the Transatlantic sculptors who have studied in Rome: but we knew positively nothing of American pictures beyond a few landscapes which found their way across the Atlantic, when, last year, Mr. Church's fine picture of the "Falls of Niagara" showed that art was not limited to Europe, and that it was not necessary for genius to study in any school but that of nature. It would be superfluous to do more than allude to a picture which was generally seen, and which was fully acknowledged as a great achievement. Mr. Church's was an unexampled and marvellous treatment of water. If he failed to give all the beauty of colour, he succeeded in rendering the motion of water—its endless variety, its weight and irresistible force—with the intense truth that only genius can attain. Here was a young artist who had mastered one of the very greatest difficulties of landscape art—representation of water in motion; and so perfect was the rainbow spanning the Falls, that at first sight it appeared an optical delusion rather than a creation of the painter. It seemed a ray of light reflecting on the picture the prismatic colour of the glass through which it passed. The line of low, distant landscape and sky was, we remember, less satisfactorily treated. Great was the expectation Mr. Church aroused when he sent a second picture to be engraved in England; for, it may be observed, it is only in the way of business that we have a chance of seeing his works.

The "Heart of the Andes" is now shown by Messrs. Day and Son, in the German Gallery, in Bond-street, with all the pomp and circumstance always attending works exhibited separately and with a special object. If no one had recorded on canvas such a mighty scene of water as the Falls of Niagara, we have all seen mountains nobly drawn, and so have a standard to judge by. Here we may say that it is not to be assumed

that the elevation and size of a mountain proportionally increase the difficulties which an artist has to surmount, and therefore there is as great merit in truthfully rendering the Alps as the Andes. Mr. Church's picture is a panorama on a vast scale. It does not impress one at first sight, and it is only by examination that full justice will be done to the remarkable qualities it exhibits. The spot selected is on the Equator, several miles from Quito. The artist is supposed to be on high ground. A river, which has broken over rocks, flows beneath him, and on either side are bold groups of trees, detached from the forest, which has its glades, secret streams, luxuriant vegetation all brought out; whilst in the foreground are bright flowering shrubs in full bloom—crimson passion-flowers and other creepers tangling around the trunks of trees, in the branches of which we see brilliant tropical birds. Beyond this dexterous and elaborate detail lies a tract of country—hill, dale, village, lake, and waterfall being given with great care. For miles the eye sweeps on with the plains to the great chain of mountains which grow out of the distance, and rise grandly towards the sky, rearing peak above peak till they are lost in the clouds, beyond which the region of eternal snow tells white against the blue sky. Two small figures before a little cross near the foreground enable one to estimate the vast scale of this grand panorama. There must be something bold in the heart of a man who sits down deliberately to paint such scenes, but for all this Mr. Church has not the pure feeling for mountain gloom and mountain glory. It is not necessary to have seen a particular mountain to recognise the general truth of its portraiture; so in the American artist's mountains we do not doubt the exactitude of the outline, but we miss the delicate subtle hand that would have lingered tenderly in tracing the detail of spur and cleft, and, in spite of the snow, following the articulation of what has been called the skeleton of the mountain. A blurred sketch of Welsh hills, by David Cox, seizes on the mind, and has more of the true elements of grandeur than Mr. Church's ten feet of panoramic view of some of the highest mountains in the world.

A certain mastery of manipulation Mr. Church undoubtedly has, but whether he is in the highest sense a great artist we are not yet prepared to decide. The "Heart of the Andes" exhibits his versatility rather than increases his reputation. The local colour of American scenery is new to us; yet, arguing from what we know, the proofs would confirm us in the opinion that Mr. Church is not a great colourist. We know the exquisite tints of American shrubs and flowers transplanted from their natural soil, and then we ask why they should lose their brilliant luminous appearance and delicacy by being painted in the Tropics. The painting might have been expected to be startling in its vividness, yet, on the contrary, it is opaque—the texture reminding us of German painting on copper. It is summer, but there is no warmth—there is sun, but it is simply light, without heat. The mountains are leaden, like the clouds—the sky has no luminousness. There is no tender dying away of tint, without which Mr. Ruskin has said there is no good, no right colour. We much regret that Mr. Church has never been in Europe—has never seen the masterpieces of his art. Nor, for the present, is he likely to do so, for he is now devoting his ambitious energies to painting icebergs in Greenland. It is impossible, however, that so determined and adventurous a man should fail to achieve success, with youth, talent, and discipline in his favour. His fellow countrymen admire and applaud him because he "sticks at nothing." He should follow the bent of his own genius, without forgetting his real public—men with eyes and hearts trained in the study of the noblest works of art. To them he must look to win his highest praise—higher than the admiration of the untravelling American connoisseur. We look on Mr. Church as the probable founder of a school of landscape painting. Something grand and revolutionary in art should, one might expect, be originated by the influences of nature on a grand scale, moulding the minds of those who study the secrets of her beauty; yet this is not necessarily the result, if we may generalize from a particular instance, and speculate whether it is as true of a people as it is of an individual that the first flights of genius are rarely very original. There is an old way of trying wings to feel how high they may soar.

Transatlantic literature has as yet scarcely produced any great national work. The best books are, for the most part, founded on European models—the most original are wild shoots grafted on the Old World stock. Will it be the same in art as in literature? Shall we see a gradual development, or shall we be startled out of all precedents by true American art, Minerva-like, springing full-grown into the astonished world? The "Falls of Niagara," by Mr. Church, would make us incline to the latter hypothesis; and we await what he may hereafter send us with the greatest curiosity and interest.

REVIEWS.

FROM PARIS TO ASTRACHAN.*

THERE are some literary productions which make us ask whether we also write in that way. To those who do not write at all, this cannot be a personal question, but every one may make it a national or a general one. Writers are occa-

sionally startled by some surprising exhibition of the shifts and necessities of their calling, and have the unpleasant suspicion forced on them that they too must seem to others every now and then to be making bricks absolutely without straw, and must be detected in substituting the most hopeless disquisitions on partridges or black-beetles—or smaller deer, if there are any—for the usual political criticism. So, too, a general reader may ask himself when a specimen of foreign bookmaking or of the folly of our ancestors comes before him, whether English bookmaking or modern bad joking is equally bad. *From Paris to Astrachan* provokes a question of this kind; and, on reflection, we think that we are not influenced by national prejudice. When we say that English bookmaking does really not come up to French, and that M. Alexandre Dumas the elder is the most incorrigible, irreclaimable, shameless old bookmaker in the world. It is not long since a work was announced as *Memoirs of the Secret Police*, by Alexandre Dumas. Here was a prize for the lovers of the terrible, the marvellous, and the prolix. But purchasers (if any one ever bought the work) must have found themselves disappointed. This great novelty was really a translation, not by M. Dumas, of an English book, and all that M. Dumas contributed was a preface about eight lines in length, stating that he hoped the translation was well done. Perhaps, however, this little artifice was the work of the publisher, and not of M. Dumas himself, and we ought not to approach the latest effort of his genius with the recollection of this singular imposition hanging about us. There are plenty of materials in his new book to enable us to judge how M. Dumas writes. The work is streaming forth from the press in a succession of tiny volumes, and the series at present does not carry us beyond the fifth. But there is no reason whatever why the volumes should ever stop. They are made on such an easy principle. The modern fashion of competitive examinations and prize-essay writing has brought into use the process of what is technically termed "going to Macculloch." That gentleman has collected such surprising stores of information on every possible subject, that for the instructive and statistical portion of his papers, a candidate has simply to turn to some of Mr. Macculloch's writings, put the information into a mild form, add moral remarks, and his business is done. M. Dumas writes in the same way. He "goes to Macculloch." He takes good heavy slices out of the common histories of Russia, and, to cheer the reader on the way, intersperses a narrative of his own personal adventures. It is in this personal narrative that he appears to us to throw English bookmakers utterly into the shade. Hundreds of English books are published which are constructed in the same way, but there is generally something in the intervening narrative. At least there are bad jokes. But M. Dumas does not give himself so much trouble. He merely indicates faintly where a bad joke would occur if he could give himself the trouble to make one, and he flows on with page after page of sheer unbroken inanity.

The first volume will supply us with a few examples of his style. This volume is occupied with recounting how he got from Paris to St. Petersburg. Put shortly, the facts are, that he joined the suite of a Russian Count, took the railway to Stettin, and went thence by boat. This is the ha'porth of bread. Now for the sack. The family attendants and belongings of the Count are described in one hundred and twelve pages. There are about five pages allowed to the courier, ten more to the music-master, and five more to the cat. The curious thing is, that M. Dumas represents himself as haunted by one grand ambition in life. He longs to have personally visited all the shores of the Mediterranean, and wishes to acquire a thorough knowledge of their history and of the peoples who now inhabit them. He also represents himself as oppressed with the fatigue of his enormous labours. He is bowed down to the earth with the task of sustaining and increasing his great literary reputation. He is emphatically a literary man—the pen never out of his hand, the midnight lamp never extinguished. So absorbed is he in his arduous pursuits, that he cannot even admit visitors. There is but one way of making his acquaintance, and that is to go to dinner with him. M. Dumas has discovered that, however assiduous he may be, he still must dine. It is no greater waste of time to eat with a stranger than to eat without a stranger, and therefore he is quite willing to admit to his table any one who wishes to make his acquaintance. He does not on this account give himself credit for hospitality or generosity. There is nothing he values but the precious time he might devote to writing; and as he does not sacrifice time by having an extra napkin laid at his dinner-table, it is a matter of perfect indifference to him whether a stranger comes or not. It was only by a curious accident that he got connected with the Russian family who eventually took him to Russia. A mutual acquaintance stated that he wished M. Dumas and the Count should be acquainted. The Count could not come to dinner with M. Dumas, and there was, therefore, a difficulty. But the ingenuity of the mutual acquaintance triumphed. He explained that the most convenient time for the Count to receive M. Dumas was between midnight and six in the morning, which was the hour when the Count's family retired for their night's rest. Even so hard-worked and resolute an author as M. Dumas acknowledged that he could find a spare hour within these limits, and the visit to the Count came off in the dead of the night. At the second or third interview, the Count and Countess took M. Dumas to a sofa, and proposed that this indefatigable student and writer should accompany them in five days to St. Petersburg. M. Dumas took three minutes to consider, and in that interval

* *De Paris à Astrakan*. Par Alexandre Dumas. Vols. i.—v. Brussels: 1859.

perceived that his vast literary engagements not only permitted, but almost compelled, immediate acquiescence. The journey was forthwith arranged, and after the five days had elapsed, the whole party set off.

In order, therefore, to estimate accurately the value of what M. Dumas writes, we must remember that we have here the outpourings of a great cosmopolite inquirer and of an author who makes authorship the serious, earnest business of a laborious life. The passages relating to the Count's cat may serve as a specimen of what such a man, with such aims and motives, can achieve:—

Signorina is Roman. The Count was paying a visit to the shop of the famous mosaic-dealer, Galanti, with the intention of purchasing a little later, when he had ascertained the price and value of the articles submitted to him.

Signorina came all at once up to the Countess, setting up her back and purring.

"O, what a beautiful cat!" cried the Countess.

"She is your Ladyship's," said Galanti.

The Countess asked her price. Galanti answered that Signorina might be given away, but was not for sale. The Countess accepted Signorina as a gift, but the Count bought mosaics of Galanti to the amount of 40,000 francs.

It is probable that Signorina was paid for, and well paid for.

One thing made the Countess uneasy; the cat is known to be the type of a constitutional subject, attaching itself, not to the master, but to the house.

The Countess feared, however much she petted Signorina, that Signorina would not attach herself to her, but would remain attached to the house of M. Galanti.

She was soon reassured. Signorina belonged to the excessively rare class of travelling cats; she had the bump of locomotion.

The beloved animal was, however, the source of much subsequent anxiety, and different incidents in the cat's history are recounted with great gravity and fidelity by M. Dumas:—

Between Aix and Turin a serious accident happened.

They had determined to send a great quantity of luggage on beforehand.

Signorina's basket was amongst this luggage.

This was discovered at the moment of getting into the carriage. The train set off; there was no means of getting Signorina back.

They consoled themselves with thinking they would recover Signorina when they passed the station where the luggage was.

But the train, which was an express, did not stop at that station. They passed by the station, to the great despair of the Countess, who then first discovered the place which Signorina held in her heart.

At the next station they set the telegraph to work, they sent off a courier, they wrote to the station-master and the person in charge of the telegraph.

They sent a hundred francs to compensate for the trouble given the officials, fifty francs to pay for Signorina's keep, and asked that the cat might be sent to the house of Rothschild, at Paris.

Two days after the arrival of the Count Signorina arrived also.

It is in writing matter as interesting and important as this that M. Dumas occupies himself so busily that he knows no leisure time but his dinner hour. Mr. Albert Smith has lately told us how wearisome he has found it to go on night after night repeating the same stories and jokes about Mont Blanc and the travellers he is supposed to have met on his way to that mountain. He asked us to realize how painful it must be to come forward, cheerful and smiling, and deal out for the thousandth time a caricatured description of some traveller's folly. We can fancy that M. Dumas must occasionally undergo a similar sensation. After he has sat steadily at his desk seven or eight hours, and finds himself still condemned to go on for another hour or two, writing more and more about a Russian nobleman's wife's cat, and giving fresh anecdotes about its getting into the wrong basket, about its puzzling the officers of customs, and about its other little adventures, he must surely feel sometimes faint in the flesh, however ready his spirit may be to go on dribbling about the cat for ever, and however he may be sustained by the promptings of his cosmopolite ambition and by the consciousness that he is reaping the harvest of an enduring fame.

Not unfrequently, however, M. Dumas goes one stage below the cat. He sometimes writes about positively nothing at all. He is fond of describing such passages in his travels as a night without any adventure whatsoever. He tells us how he determined to go to sleep, and then how he went to sleep, and then how he woke up and had a little iced wine and water, and then how he went to sleep again. Who can wonder that the series of his little volumes shows no sign of terminating? As little can we wonder that, in order to relieve the narrative, he occasionally introduces touches that somewhat startle us. History puts on a very new face, and fiction is calmly introduced where something like accuracy is desirable. The following, for instance, are the reflections and recollections which Cronstadt awakened in the breast of M. Dumas:—

In the last war Admiral Napier undertook to capture Cronstadt. It would be, according to him, a mere nothing for the English fleet. He would breakfast at Cronstadt and dine at St. Petersburg. At the moment of weighing anchor he was asked for his last orders.

A double ration of chloroform, was the answer of the terrible Commodore.

A double ration of chloroform was served out; but, when he arrived off Cronstadt, Admiral Napier contented himself with saluting Cronstadt.

Cronstadt is simply impregnable, a fact of which Admiral Napier was not aware.

We consoled him for his disappointment by taking Bomarsund.

We hope that the hard-won hour of M. Dumas's literary leisure may some day be enlivened by the arrival of the terrible Commodore, who will talk to him over the soup, and explain, in his own affable and easy way, what really happened in the campaign in which M. Dumas conceives the French to have taken Bomarsund to console the English. It is possible, that if this little historical incident were still insisted on by M. Dumas, the Admiral might finally give him what the sailor in *Tom Cringle's Log* calls "an evasive answer."

BLINDNESS.

EIGHT years before his death, Dr. Bull became blind. His blindness was brought on by the overstrained exercise of his sight in microscopic researches, especially in the examination of sand for the discovery of minute shells. About the same time that he lost his sight, he lost to a very great extent the use of his limbs also. Under this double affliction he bore up cheerfully, finding his chief pleasure in communicating to others, so far as his means and opportunities went, the alleviations and resources which had to a certain extent supplied the place of the lost sense in his own case. The composition of the book now posthumously published largely engaged his thoughts and time. His death, however, has left it somewhat incomplete. This fact, and the circumstances under which the work was written, might allowably plead for a certain amount of critical forbearance even if it were much worse than it is. It can very well afford, however, to stand upon its own merits. If it adds little that is new to its subject in the way of fact or discussion, it has the merit of being agreeably written, and contains a good deal of interesting anecdote and tolerable reflection.

The condition of the blind is a subject which has hitherto been very little investigated, though it is rich in instruction of various kinds. The sum total of our knowledge being given, it is no easy matter to classify it—to assign the origin of each portion to its appropriate faculty, to determine what is due to the senses, what to the independent activity of the mind reacting upon their reports, and what to each individual sense. If, wherever a particular organ is wanting, we find that certain sensations and conceptions, which are always found when that organ exists, are wanting also, and if the restoration of the missing sense confers the hitherto absent impressions and ideas, we may consider that it is satisfactorily proved to be their source. The experience of the blind who have never possessed the sense of sight would, if accurately reported, throw much light on many of the phenomena of vision. The testimony of those who have become blind in adolescence, or adult age, or even in infancy, does not possess the same value. For however short a time they may have possessed the faculty of sight, and though they may have lost all distinct recollection of its exercise, and can call up no distant imagination of colour or any visual object, it has still contributed something to their mental stock, which remains in its effects, even when all traces of its origin have been lost. The born blind are the class most interesting to the scientific student. They form, however, a very small proportion of the entire blind population of the world, and the importance of specially observing and interrogating them has not been appreciated. "The term 'born blind,'" says Dr. Bull, "is indiscriminately applied to all children losing their sight before the eighth year, when adolescence commences." It is obvious that such a classification as this is calculated to defeat the ends of scientific inquiry. Long before a child's eighth year, his powers of sight and observation have been wonderfully developed, and a whole harvest of conceptions gathered in, and influences submitted to, which deprive his example of value as an instance of the effects of the absence of vision. Of 30,000 blind people in England, those who lose their sight in infancy—that is, before their eighth year—amount to only 2500. The proportion of those truly born-blind is exceedingly small. "Not one case," says Dr. Bull, "came under my notice during a professional life of more than five-and-twenty years in London, although a physician for the greater part of that period to a Lying-in Institution averaging more than a thousand cases annually; nor do I remember a single one to have occurred in the practice of a large circle of medical friends." The opportunities, then, of the only conclusive kind of observation—of the thorough application of what Mr. Mill has called the method of difference—in determining the nature of the information due to the sense of sight, are of the rarest occurrence. It is the more necessary, by isolating them—by carefully distinguishing in our inquiries those who have never seen from those who have done so, for however short a time—to turn such scant opportunities to their true account.

One conclusion, however, has been arrived at by some high authorities which is to us not a little startling, and which, we think, deserves other than the very summary treatment it has received at their hands. To an assertion of Dr. Bull's, that "the blind philosopher may understand as well as any other man the distances and motions of the heavenly bodies," &c., his editor appends the contradiction, "Not the born-blind, who has no idea of what space really is." Mr. Johns is officially connected with "the largest blind school in Europe," and his opportunities of observation have, of course, been very great. His assertion is partially confirmed by the high philosophical authority of Sir William Hamilton, who says that "the observations of Platoner on a person born blind would prove that *sight*, not *touch*, is the sense by which we principally obtain our knowledge of figure and our empirical knowledge of space. Saunderson, at any rate, he adds, was not born blind." (Hamilton's *Reid*, p. 125). Saunderson, however, lost his sight utterly at twelve months, the organ itself being destroyed. Now, if these twelve months of vision could make the difference between the acquisition and the inability to gain so fundamental a notion as that of space—a notion involving in its presence the power to rise to the highest

* *The Sense of Vision Denied and Lost.* By Thomas Bull, M.D. Edited by the Rev. B. G. Johns, Chaplain of the Blind School, St. George's Fields. London: Longmans. 1859.

truths of mathematical and physical science, and, in its absence, impotence to make the most distant approach to the conception of the elementary ideas they involve—we have a conclusive proof of the absurdity of grouping together, on the ground of similarity of condition, the blind strictly from their birth, and those who up to their eighth year have retained the power of sight. "The most accurate observations of the blind from birth evince," Sir W. Hamilton elsewhere says, "that their conceptions of figure are extremely limited." The dissertation in which he proposed to discuss this subject has, unfortunately, never yet been published. In the mean time some well-known facts and obvious considerations appear to contradict his doctrine. The conception of space, or extension, is simply that of externality, or of parts outside of parts. The conception of figure (which is extension bounded in a particular manner), and that of magnitude (that is, of relative extension), imply, of course, the fundamental notion from which they are derivatives and which they qualify. That men born blind can move through space, that they can find their way through intricate passages, that in rooms differently constructed they know how to adapt their movements to difference of size and form, shows that they have ideas of figure and magnitude as trustworthy and distinct as those possessed by the seeing. William Hankey, the watchmaker of Barnstable, was born blind; he, nevertheless, attained greater skill in his craft than the majority of his fellow-tradesmen, and, in cases of difficulty, was frequently "called in" as an eminent practitioner where others had failed. Of course, he could only recognise the several parts of clock and watch by their shape and form, and in putting them together he can hardly have been without that idea of relative position in space, or of parts external to each other, which is what we mean by extension. Sir W. Hamilton, it should be remarked, does not assert, with Mr. Johns, that sight is "the necessary condition of any perception of extension at all," but only "of its more prompt and precise perception." Even this seems, on his own principles, to claim too much for it. Sir W. Hamilton holds the Berkeleyan Theory of Vision, according to which sight presents us merely with coloured surfaces, and therefore acquaints us only with superficial extension, or with extension in the two dimensions of length and breadth. Space, however, is trinal extension—or extension in the three dimensions of length, breadth, and thickness, or depth. It might be contended with more plausibility, that a being gifted only with sight could attain no idea of what space really is, than that vision is absolutely necessary to its acquisition. The case reported by Dr. Franz in the *Transactions of the Royal Society* for 1841, of the restoration to sight, in his eighteenth year, of a lad born blind, who, being shown geometrical figures on the first day, without touching, recognised and named them accurately, as circle, triangle, &c., seems to show not only that a precise knowledge of figures may be attained by the blind, but that the sensations derived from the same object by sight and touch have something in common, and are connected in our minds not merely by invariable associations, but by a natural resemblance. Some readers may recollect the contrary answer to a hypothetical case of this kind proposed by "that very ingenious and studious promoter of real knowledge, the worthy Mr. Moleneux," which Locke gives in the ninth chapter of his *Essay on the Human Understanding*. In stating that the "born blind have no idea of what space really is," Mr. Johns may perhaps be using the term "space," not in its philosophical sense to express extension, whether great or small, but, as it is often popularly employed, to denote infinite extension. There can be no doubt that sight is an indispensable aid in any attempt to realize the conception of vast space. The world of the blind, at any one moment, reaches no further than the sweep of his arm; and his imagination, restricted within the range of his experience, can scarcely pass these narrow limits. In some such sense as this, it may be quite true that the born blind has no adequate idea of what space really is.

Other questions of interest to psychologists, such as—why, with two eyes, objects are beheld single?—why, with the picture of objects inverted on the retina, the objects themselves are seen erect?—whether the perception of distance is immediate or indirect, an intuition of sense or an inference of the mind?—are likely to be solved more satisfactorily by examination of the experience of the blind from their birth on occasion of the first bestowal of sight than by any other means.

Dr. Bull devotes an interesting chapter of his work to examining the influence of blindness on the intellectual character. That the blind are in general remarkable for power of memory, the faculty of concentrated attention, a strong taste for and capacity to excel in abstract and speculative science, is a well-known and natural result of their privation. Dr. Guillié, the celebrated French teacher of the blind, appears, rather paradoxically, to think that the want of sight is an advantage rather than a hindrance in the study of mathematics. "Si le genre humain," says Royer-Collard, "avait été aveugle-né, sa condition dans l'univers serait bien au-dessous de ce qu'elle est, mais sa métaphysique serait bien plus saine." But the senses are not merely the inlets of information—the impressions which they convey appeal directly to the emotions, and give their bias to the moral dispositions and propensities. With regard to the effect of blindness on the moral character, some curious observations have been made of consequences which seem too naturally connected with that privation to be altogether valueless, but

which have been, perhaps, too absolutely stated. Diderot long ago remarked that a certain degree of inhumanity was generally noticeable in the blind. The cry of grief and the language of direct complaint are the only excitements to compassion to which they are accessible. The silent appeal of look and gesture cannot reach them. "Do not we," he says, "cease to feel commiseration when the distance or smallness of the objects produces in us the same effect that the want of sight does in them?" Dr. Guillié (quoted by a writer in the last edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) attributes to them a lack of modest decency; and though he acquits them of a disposition to atheism, he says, "that he cannot altogether justify them from the reproach of impiety." The scepticism of Saunderson is well known. Newton, he said, believed on the testimony of nature, "while I am reduced to believe on that of Newton." Excluded from all perception of the beauty of the visible universe, and from the counter-revelations of the telescope and microscope—which appeal so strongly to religious wonder and awe—it is scarcely matter of surprise that the susceptibility of the blind to lively religious emotions should be fainter than that of the seeing. They may be told and taught all that others know, but the feelings can scarcely be reached at second-hand:—

Segnius irritant animum demissa per aures,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ
Ipse sibi tradit spectator.

When Dr. Guillié attributes to the blind a tendency to suspicion, selfishness, and ingratitude—a general want, in short, of humane and kindly natural feelings—it should be remembered that his observations, though very extensive, have had for their objects the blind as collected together within the walls of a public institution. The emotions and dispositions in which he proclaims them deficient are almost necessarily of home growth. They arise in response to parental care, fraternal and sisterly affection, and individual friendship, and can scarcely spring up under the wholesale treatment inevitable when large numbers of the young are gathered together within the walls of a public school or asylum.

Our observations have referred rather to Dr. Bull's subject than to his book. In conclusion, we again recommend it as attractive and profitable reading.

A CANADIAN DRAMATIST.*

A DRAMA on a Scriptural subject is, at any rate in modern times, almost certain to prove an essentially undramatic production. The type with which a host of ambitious rhapsodies by the smaller fry of English poets has made us familiar is not likely to tempt many readers to trace the modifications which it may undergo in the hands of an anonymous Canadian poet. It may be as well, therefore, to say at once that *Saul* does not belong to the school of the Jephthas, and Noahs, and Japhets, and Satans—that it has nothing of the life-drama about it—and that it makes no pretence to spasmodic mysticism. Although, in accordance with the Scriptural narrative, it personifies the evil spirit which torments the King, the interest is concentrated, not on any Lucifer or Mephistopheles, but on the struggle of Saul against the troubles which assail him from without and from within, and on the gradual unfolding of his fate from the day when he went out to seek his father's asses and returned a King, down to his despairing visit to the Witch of Endor and his final overthrow and death on the field of Gilboa. The supernatural element is throughout subordinated to the human interest, and the powers of darkness are made to occupy the same sort of position in the drama which is filled by the witches in *Macbeth*. Except as prompters of evil, tempting Macbeth first to his crime and then to his destruction, the witches take no direct part in the action of Shakspeare's play; and, in confining the operation of his evil spirit almost exclusively to the perversion of Saul's mind, our author has shown a sense of the exigencies of dramatic composition, the absence of which is the most glaring defect in ordinary attempts at the construction of a Scriptural drama.

For the purpose of dramatic handling, the story of Saul is one of the grandest subjects to be found in the whole range of history. His strange elevation to the throne, his assumption of Samuel's office and consequent sentence of deposition, his demoniac possession, his jealousy of David's popularity, his appeal to the powers of sorcery, and his suicide on the field of his fated defeat, are incidents on which Shakspeare might have grafted conceptions not inferior to *Macbeth* or *Lear*. Some idea of this kind seems to have guided the author of *Saul* to his choice of subject; and the ambition to write a play on the Shakspearian model, which has ruined so many mediocre poets, has inspired him with a larger measure of the spirit of the great dramatist than has generally fallen to the share of modern imitators. *Saul* is said to be the production of a self-taught man, and it is scarcely possible to read half-a-dozen pages of it without being convinced that you have to do with a man of one book. He is evidently so deeply imbued with the thoughts which he has found in Shakspeare as scarcely to sever them in imagination from his own. Not only are isolated passages often mere reproductions of Shakspearian ideas, but the construction of the whole play, and the frame of scene after scene, may as easily be traced to the same origin. If a selection of such parallels were extracted, the author of *Saul* would perhaps be pronounced, on their evidence,

* *Saul: a Drama, in Three Parts.* Montreal: J. Lovell. London: Routledge. 1859.

the most audacious plagiarist in the history of literature. And yet this would be a very unfair judgment on a writer who displays a vein of dramatic genius more original and vigorous than any modern playwright whom we can call to mind. His plagiarisms are, we believe, as honest as they are bold; and the harmony which pervades the whole work is only to be accounted for by the hypothesis which we have suggested—that he had dwelt upon the pages of Shakspeare until the thoughts became so much a part of his own mind as to have made him almost unconscious of the distinction between the coinage of his own fancy and the wealth which he had borrowed from the idol of his imitation. The result is a drama to which a reader who had never heard of Shakspeare would, perhaps, ascribe more than its due share of praise, but which, after every deduction for stolen gems, possesses an originality which may be sought in vain among the more cautious plagiarists who have learned the judicious lesson to borrow from sources less easily detected than the pages of the best-read book in the English language. But the merit of the book is so much more in its dramatic force than in its special poetic beauties—though these are not wanting—that the opinion which may be formed of isolated passages would be no criterion of its merit as a whole. The conception of Saul's character is worked out with great artistic power. The key-note of his mind is the self-reliance which one so readily associates with physical strength. The first act of his reign is to invoke Heaven's judgments on himself if he should fail to relieve the defenders of Jabesh Gilead, who are threatened with horrible barbarities by the King of Ammon. His struggle for precedence against the power of the priesthood is foreshadowed by his first exhortation to the panic-stricken Israelites to follow Saul and Samuel; and when the messengers from Jabesh Gilead piteously entreat him, "O Saul, do not fail us," the new-made monarch replies right royally:—

Fail you!
Let the morn fail to break; I will not break
My word. Haste, or I'm there before you. Fail!
Let the morn fail the east; I'll not fail you.
But swift and silent as the streaming wind,
Unseen approach, then gathering up my force
At dawning, sweep on Ammon, as Night's blast
Sweeps down from Carmel on the dusky sea.

The quibble on the word "break" is an obvious imitation of Shakspeare's habit of introducing a play upon words into some of his most serious passages. But we have quoted the lines not as an illustration of the author's style, but as indicating his conception of the character of the King while in the first exaltation of unaccustomed power. The other element which combines in the mind of Saul with his natural audacity to lead him into the troubles which soon gather round him, is a meditative temper, at one time showing itself in half-melancholy moralizing, and at another breaking into scepticism, and questioning the decrees of priests and Providence in a tone which bodes anything but pacific relations between himself and the prophet from whom he has received his crown. This side of the King's character is also faintly shadowed forth in one of the early scenes—the morning of the triumphant attack on the hosts of Ammon:—

The day breaks calmly, howsoever it end,
And nature shows no great consent with man;
Curtailing not the slumber of the clouds,
Nor rising with the clarion of the wind
To blow his signals. . . .

But the sound of movement in the enemy's camp and the reports of his own captains rouse the King's impatience:—

Prompt is the word upon the tongue of time,
From day to day, on echoing through the years
That glide away into eternity,
Whispering the same unceasing syllable.
Boy, bring my arms! not now we'll moralize,
Although to fight it needs that some must fall.
When this day's work is done, and serious night
Disposes to reflection and gives leisure,
We will review the hours of the past slaughter;
And while around to heaven ascends a dew
Distilled from blood now throbbing in its veins,
Sorrow for whom we must. Till then we'll act.
Survive who may, retain who shall his breath,
We'll now assault, and start the work of death.

The first hint of the questioning spirit of the King is given in the next scene, which follows the rout of the enemy:—

But let us sheathe these trenchant ministers;
For by the souls for whom they have hewn a passage
Unto some far mysterious gehenna,
Or to the troubled sepulchre of the air,
They have well done.

A spirited picture follows of the field over which the Israelites have hunted down their foes:—

A very shambles with the enemy's slain,
That lie in heaps before the walls of Jabesh,
And thence to this grow fewer, like the drops
Of blood sore oozing from the savage beast,
As it flees before the hunter till 'tis drained.
We have drained this day the pride of Ammon.

The first crisis in Saul's fate is the wilful assumption of the priestly office, when, after waiting in vain for Samuel, he did sacrifice before his army; and the intervening scenes are skilfully contrived to exhibit the growth of the King's impatience up to the point when he sets at defiance Samuel's injunction to wait for his arrival. Jehoidah, "a sour, disdainful priest," with the true ecclesiastical hatred for kings who overshadow his order,

goads Saul into fury with dark hints that the struggle provoked by Jonathan at Geba was begun with no assurance of Divine permission, and that the army is but a rabble compared with the Philistines; and he goes so far as to suggest doubts whether Samuel will appear within the promised seven days. The prophet still lingers, and the army is seized with panic. A false rumour spread by the King of Samuel's arrival is in vain. The mere presence of the enemy makes the army melt away like hoar-frost in the sun. Saul, furious with his pack of mongrel hounds, sets guards to stay the flight:—

None can escape. I have the camp surrounded
With those who will not spare; if more choose flight,
Let them dig downwards for it to the grave.

Even the guards are reported as half disposed to slink away by night, and the King retires on the eve of the seventh day with the exclamation of disgust—

Would that there were no night,
For half the world abuse it. Let them go,
Although it is ungrateful as 'tis cowardly,
Thus to desert me coldly by degrees,
As breath from off a mirror.

The fatal day dawns, and Saul will wait no longer. The presumptuous sacrifice, the sudden appearance of Samuel with the curse upon his lips, and the rout of Gilgal, almost break Saul's spirit:—

. There is no virtue left
In mortal man—nay, women had done better.
Oh, Jonathan, thy glorious deed at Geba,
Put out unto unworthy usury,
Is lost in Gilgal's issue!

But Jonathan, still undaunted, replies—

Yearn not over me;
What we have done, O King and Sire, is ours,
Part of ourselves—yea, more, it will not die
When we shall, nor can any steal it;
For honour hath that cleaving quality
It sticks upon us, and none may remove it,
Except ourselves by future deeds of baseness.

SAUL.

We never were so poor since we grew rich.

JONATHAN.

We will grow richer than we yet have been.
And from this need, yet heap up such abundance
That we shall wonder why we ever sorrowed
At this petty pilfering.

There is much spirit and force in some of the passages we have quoted; but we have selected them, not as being more than average specimens of the author's diction, but because they give the best hint (more than a hint is impossible within our limits) of the character of the dramatic action in the first of the three parts into which the play is divided. The remaining incidents which complete the orthodox five acts of Part I. are the enterprise of Jonathan and his armour-bearer at Michmash and the miraculous dispersion of the Philistines, the expedition against the Amalekites, the second curse of Samuel, the secret consecration of the son of Jesse, the visitation of Saul's evil spirit, and the soothing influence of David's harp. At each step in the progress of the story the King falls deeper into scepticism, and, from cursing Samuel, goes on to question the justice of the Omnipotent. The gradual development of this temper of mind, until it culminates in demonic possession, is the leading idea of this portion of the play, and it is worked out by the skilful use of the recorded incidents in Saul's career, without diminishing the sympathy which the hero of a drama ought always to command. The disobedience of Saul in sparing the Amalekitish King is made to flow naturally from his horror and disgust at the slaughter in which his troops are engaged:—

They've made the massacre a carnival,
And fleshed their souls yet deeper than their swords.
Pshaw, the broad multitude knows nothing of judgment;
Revenge with them was at the bottom of it,
While sensuality rose to the top like scum.
Revenge is hunger of the mind, and hunger
Makes all things cruel.
. I fear that most of men,
If they were licensed by divine decree,
Would change to demons and for aught be ready.

Malzah, the evil spirit, who is commissioned to enter Saul, is quite a new creation in the demonic world. There is something very startling in the idea of making a possessing demon full of fun, like Puck, and even capable of a sort of pity (a demonic pity, however, which has no mixture of sympathy in it) for the victim whom he goes on torturing, not so much from malice as from the desire to get through the task which has been imposed upon him. But, such as he is imagined, Malzah is worked into more substantially than almost any artistic creation out of the depths, if we except Goethe's Mephistopheles, the sprites of Shakspeare's plays, and that marvellous conception of devilry which is to be found in De la Motte Fouqué's *Sintram*. Malzah is a devil-may-care kind of devil, and trolls at his work in a strange, reckless way. Queer snatches of song, with an unearthly no-meaning in them, are his delight. At one instant he is watching Saul till—

His mind's defences are blown down with passion,
And I can enter him unchallenged, as
A traveller does an inn; and, when I'm there,
He is himself now so much like a demon,
He will not notice me.

Almost in the same breath we have him chanting—

There was a devil, and his name was I,
From Profundus he did cry;
He changed his note as he changed his coat,
And his coat was of a varying dye.
It had many a hue: in hell 'twas blue;
'Twas green in the sea, and white in the sky.

Even when exorcised by David's harp, Malzah is as cheerful as ever:—

Music, Music hath its sway,
Music's order I obey.
I have unwound myself at sound
From off Saul's heart where coiled I lay.

The King's horror after his first attack of frenzy is given with as much pathos as truth, though the images are somewhat recklessly used:—

Oh! wife, it is not these corporeal pains—
Though they are past description—that unman me,
But 'tis the horrid overthrow of my mind,
My will's harsh subjugation, that doth humble me.
I know the strength of man; I know a spasm
Can paralyze it; I know his cogitation
May fail at an impertinent idea;
But to have the soul swallowed up of its own self,
Like ocean by its own devouring sands,
Or the clear sun high in the firmament,
Thence downward sucked, and quenched in a volcano—
Oh! no stout-hearted courage can brave that!
I would that I could guide my thoughts—but no—
The King's most lawless subject is himself.

A scene with a physician—which must certainly have been suggested by the short scene in *Macbeth*—follows, in which Saul thus upbraids the leech who cannot gratify the King's modest request, "Give me a tonic for the heart":—

The mind—the mind's the only worthy patient!
Were I one of thy craft, ere this I'd have
Anatomized a spirit; I'd have treated
Soul wounds of my own making! . . .
. Ye are impostors!
All said, ye are impostors—fleas! Skin-deep
Is deep with you: you only prick the flesh
When you should probe the overwhelmed heart
And lance the horny wounds of old despair.
Away; Death is worth all the doctors.

The second and third parts of the tragedy carry on the fatal history of Saul's mind with increasing power. The growth of the resolve to slay David by his own javelin or by the sword of the Philistines is the main feature of Saul's possession; and though we cannot attempt to carry our sketch of the action further than we have already done, there is one passage which embodies so striking an idea of homicidal mania that we must give it for the benefit of juries and mad-doctors. Here is Saul, under the influence of the demon, brooding over the murder of David:—

I am beneath the tyranny of a vow
Which I will honour whilst I am eclipsed,
That I hereafter may have power to plead
I did it in the darkness—'tis the fiend;
He darkens, yet illuminates my mind,
Like the black heavens when lightnings ride the wind.

The fit is over, and Saul then soliloquizes:—

If in my fiend-fraught frenzy I had killed him,
It had been well; 't had not my conscience burdened,
Yet lightened much my heart.

We should like very much to know whether this way of coaxing madness into crime, with the notion of escaping conscience, if not punishment, is not a common feature of the homicidal mania of the doctors.

One peculiarity of our author should be mentioned before we leave him to the judgment of the public. The aim which he sets before himself is to depict the human emotions which are not for one age but for all time; and he shows the utmost contempt for local colouring, and indulges in anachronisms as boldly as if he were himself a Shakespeare. Here, for example, is the beginning of a peasant dialogue:—

Is it morning, sirs? for yet the sun's abed,
And has a vile black nightcap on his head.
What an abominable teaster is this heavens;
This sky's as dismal as mortality.
Ah! me.

Man is a pipe that Life doth smoke,
As saunters it the earth about;
And when 'tis wearied of the joke,
Death comes and knocks the ashes out.
Something with a moral in it so easily comes
In these sad times.

As an illustration of some of the observations with which we commenced our criticism, we must conclude with one passage, a Soliloquy on Sleep, the paternity of which is obvious enough. In the appropriateness of the ideas to the position of a king tossing on a restless bed, it is certainly not inferior to the original which suggested it. The contrast in Saul's mind is between king and slave as such. In Henry IV., it is rather between luxury and outward discomfort. The tenderness of the concluding thought also strikes us as a remarkably natural transition. But we must give the passage without further comment, as a very striking combination of originality and plagiarism:—

I'll strive to sleep.
Strive did I say? There was a time when sleep
Was wont to approach me with her soundless feet,

And take me by surprise. I called her not,
And yet she'd come; but now I even woo her,
And court her by the cunning use of drugs;
But still she will not turn to me her steps,
Not even to approach, and, looking down,
Drop on these temples one oblivious tear.
I that am called a King, whose word is law,
Awake I lie, and toss; whilst the poor slave
Whom I have taken prisoner in my wars
Sleeps soundly; and he who hath sold himself to service,
Although his cabin rock beneath the gale,
Hears not the uproar of the night, but smiling
Dreams of the year of jubilee. I would that I
Could sleep at night; for then I should not hear
Ahinoam, poor grieved one! sighing near.

Extracts will at best give but a disjointed idea of a work which aims at unity of action; but few who read the book will doubt that, if dramatic power is to be recognised as a quality of higher order than mere musical facility of diction, the unknown author of *Saul* ought to take a very prominent position among our living poets.

MINERALOGY OF THE ANCIENTS.*

THERE is no branch of human knowledge in which the precise employment of words is more desirable than in that which deals with the multifarious substances composing the crust of our planet. Not only should we avoid betokening under the same patronymic objects which are quite distinct in character, but the aim of educated men ought also to be to apply right names to certain and well-defined things. Modern authors on mineralogy have, for some years past, run a praiseworthy tilt, on the one hand, against the looseness of language in which popular ignorance delights, and, on the other, against the conceit of hasty experimenters prone to dub with new titles substances not yet sufficiently proved to be distinct from their fellows. Some of the errors occasioned by the first misuse of names are so deeply engrained among us that, in despite of better knowledge and of the consciousness that they perpetuate blundering ideas, it is inconvenient to attempt to shake them off. How long, for instance, must we continue to write with "black-lead" pencils, although the mineral which leaves its stain on the paper contains not a particle of the Saturnine metal? Or, why should we persist in drawing with "red chalk" crayons, dashing in our shadows with "black chalk," and taking out grease spots with "French chalk" or "Briancçon chalk," when all and singular of those natural products are utterly different, both in inner and outer, in chemical and physical properties, from the material of those well-loved cliffs that make

White Albion shimmer on the eye?

Troublesome as are these contradictions in common language, they are far exceeded by the confusion worse confounded which holds sway in the language of workmen daily brought into contact with some or other of the minerals. With them, for example, the word "sulphur" may signify either the common and comparatively innocent yellow substance, iron pyrites, or it may mean the deadly fire-damp which has so often claimed its hecatomb of victims from our coal-mines; or it may be the personification of some mischievous influence produced on a metal by an obscure cause—apparently linked in their minds with the attributes of the approved melodramatic author of evil.

We have alluded to these facts because, without a fair acknowledgment of our own modern shortcomings, we are hardly prepared to make due allowances for the inaccuracies of ancient authors and compilers, or to appreciate the difficulty which besets the researches of those who endeavour to ferret out the interpretation to be given in modern language to the terms used by the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman writers. Such inquiries must have suggested themselves to every thoughtful reader of the Bible or student of classical literature, but the replies to be extracted from ordinary dictionaries and annotations must very generally have excited either mistrust or dissatisfaction. Dr. Moore—who, when he published the first edition of his *Ancient Mineralogy*, some twenty-four years ago, was Professor of the Greek and Latin languages in Columbia College—has approached the task in the modest spirit of a scholar desirous of throwing light on an interesting but entangled subject, and completes it with a full admission that much more remains to be done in the same field. He discusses, first, the few metals and other mineral substances mentioned in the Scriptures, showing clearly how the names given to some of them in our translation are erroneous; and then passes to the more full review of metals, earths, and gems as handed down to us by Pliny, Theophrastus, and Dioscorides, as well as in the scattered notices of various other authors. Dr. Moore is certainly not inclined to believe, with Buffon, that the ancients were far more advanced and better informed than ourselves in the natural history of animals and minerals; and we doubt not that he would except the physical and natural history sciences from Aristotle's unsatisfactory suggestion, that "probably every art and all wisdom has often been explored to the farthest and again forgotten." He gives full credit to the artists of ancient times for the taste and skill which they introduced into their works, and to their philosophical observers for an industry and perseverance which only failed

* *Ancient Mineralogy*. By N. F. Moore, LL.D. Second Edition. London: Sampson Low, Son, and Co.

because they had set out on a wrong path. Now and then he appears inclined to stretch a point in their favour, with a very small foundation to stand upon. Thus, from a passage among the fragments of Ctesias, he thinks we "might, perhaps, infer that the ancients, 400 years before the Christian era, had some obscure notion of the use of lightning-rods." Ctesias speaks of a fountain of India, from the bottom of which was obtained a kind of iron of which he had two swords, and which was of such a nature that, being implanted in the ground, it averted clouds, and hail, and lightnings. A very obscure notion this, in truth, and one which robs our Franklins and Snow Harrises of but little of their merit in protecting our dwellings on land and on sea. There is a strange want of precision in taking a conductor to be the same thing as an averter (*ἀπορροαὺς*) of lightning; and, with equal justice, we might have drawn arguments from antique pages to show that certain gems were capable of being used instead of the iron rod, seeing that one of the reputed virtues of the emerald was its power of averting tempests; and that coral, powdered and sprinkled in the ground, was an infallible protector against lightning, hail, and other meteoric enemies of the agriculturist.

There are, doubtless, some points in which we are apt to underrate the advance which had been made at the time of the Roman Empire in many of the arts depending on the application of mineral substances, and bearing directly on the comfort and convenience of life. When we see the unfurnished condition of the holes so often serving as windows in the south of Europe, and recollect the scarcity and value of glass in former days, we may probably fail to appreciate the high condition to which horticulture appears to have risen, when, according to Pliny, the "lapis specularis"—our selenite, or crystallized gypsum—was largely employed in protecting various plants from the cold. Martial tells us that apple-trees and vines were thus enclosed in diaphanous houses; and Columella says that in this way the table of Tiberius was supplied with cucumbers almost throughout the year. Even banqueting-rooms, baths, and porticos were thus guarded against the wintry winds; and Martial refers to a prototype of our so-called Crystal Palaces, in words which would well apply to our Thames-flavoured atmosphere of the present day:—

Hibernis objecta notis specularia puro
Admittunt soles et sine fœce diem.

It is difficult to determine whether or not some of the "lapis specularis" or of the phengites, to which much the same characters are attributed, was not mica—a substance which from its greater elasticity has been more frequently used for similar purposes in our own times.

Among the very numerous bodies quoted by the ancients as valuable for this or that art, it is almost impossible to fix with certainty on the modern equivalents of many of them. Take those employed for medicine alone. Asia Minor and the islands of the Archipelago appear to have furnished as full a contingent to the Pharmacopœia as even the vegetable juices of South America and the West Indies have done for the last two or three centuries. Whose were the "vile bodies" experimented upon has not been placed on record; but tastings and doses of all manner of salts, earths, powdered gems, metals, and combustibles must have been liberally exhibited, noted, and commented upon; and either faith must have been very mighty with the patients of old, or we moderns may not be so accessible to or observant of certain influences, for we can recognise by their effects a very small proportion of the long lists of sanative minerals. A few, to be sure, have survived the invasion of science and the importation of hosts of new drugs—some embalmed in popular belief, some even under the sign manual of constituted authorities; whilst the faith of the world of patients appears to be largely drawn off in other directions. We doubt whether there is anything more of "dark ages," or barbarism, or credulity attaching to the ceremonials of the sealing of the cakes of Lemnian earth, than to the trade of which an outward and visible sign is the papering and sealing up of packets of the "Supreme Cure-all," as it may be witnessed any day from the pavement of Temple Bar.

Dr. Moore has arranged his remarks on the various mineral substances according as they were employed as pigments, as medicines, as precious stones, for building purposes, or for the production of metals. This classification has its advantages; but the divisions and headings might have been ordered more conveniently for reference. The book contains little that is new, although some of its opinions, broached before by others, are fair subjects for further discussion. The author's belief that the *vasa muricina* were Oriental porcelain, and that a stone called Fire-resister, or Fire-proof (*πυρράχος*), employed in the construction of furnaces, was limestone, is likely to be challenged by many; whilst his suggestion that many of the ancient minerals are not known to us because their habitats—so to speak—have been utterly exhausted, is not less assailable. It needs but a small acquaintance with the infinite varieties of form and colour in minerals to feel that naturalists, deprived as they were till beyond the middle of the last century of the exact aids of chemistry and the laws of crystalline form, must have had a tendency to multiply names, unchecked by any fear of false classification. It is thus very puzzling to read back farther than a hundred years ago; and the treatises of the Middle Ages, the quaint hexameters of Marbodæus, the authoritative paragraphs of Al-

bertus Magnus, and the practical pages of George Bauer, contribute scarcely any assistance, on moot questions, to the interpretation of the older authors. Dr. Hill, the translator of Theophrastus, and Wallerius, the Swedish mineralogist, commenced in the last century to read the old names by a new light; and De Launay, in his *Minéralogie des Anciens*, contributed, in 1803, a great store of information on the subject. Dr. Moore's little work, although treating it in a less searching and comprehensive manner, may be recommended as an antidote to the mistakes often made among names, and as a brief and popular statement of the knowledge of inorganic substances among the ancients.

ROBERT MORNAY.*

ROBERT MORNAY is a book which may stand as a very fair representative of a considerable class of modern novels. They have no specific name. They are neither religious, nor professional, nor artistic; nor are they intended either to amuse or to instruct; and yet, in some points of view, they appear to be designed to merit or to fulfil each of these epithets and purposes. Novels in general are perhaps best described as mental anodynes—contrivances for absorbing every mental process which can disturb or excite, in a sort of idle, gentle, passive attention to something perfectly easy to understand, and not entirely unpleasant to observe. They occupy in literature very much the same position which is occupied in medicine by opiates. That particular class of novels to which *Robert Mornay* belongs are opiates of a very peculiar kind—opiates intended not for the reader, but for the author. They are a contrivance for satisfying that eagerness which many persons feel in the present day to think upon the gravest subjects without trouble, without knowledge, without responsibility, without premisses, and without conclusions. The very form of the title-page is a sufficient indication of what is to follow—"Robert Mornay. By Max Ferrer. 'Truth may sometimes come out of the devil's mouth'"—a collocation which seems to suggest that the novel is true and the writer a devil. Characteristically enough, the following page announces that the work is "dedicated to the author's youngest sister." To suppose that "Max Ferrer" is otherwise than a pseudonym would be a libel on the race of godfathers and godmothers. Who ever knew an Englishman called "Max"? It is one of the little affectations which distinguish novelists in the present day that they usually prefer being pseudonymous to being anonymous; and it is also characteristic that they are so afraid of being charged with affectation on the one hand, whilst they cling to it fondly on the other, that the pseudonyms which they select are always a little, and only just a little, out of the common way. Ferrers or Ferrer (*de Ferrariis*, Ironworks) is not a very uncommon name; but no one would ever meet with a Ferrer, and, above all, with a Max Ferrer, elsewhere than on the title-page of such a book as *Robert Mornay*. A year or two ago a little tale of the same kind was published by one "Max Lyle," and it was easy to trace in it, as in *Robert Mornay*, the sort of temper which dictated the selection. "I am above the vulgarity," its name seems to say, "of dressing myself in borrowed plumes. I do not call myself Stanley Mowbray or Mortimer Howard, but I am not exactly Tom, Dick, or Harry." We can quite understand the wish to conceal the authorship of a novel, but a *nom de plume* is an unnecessary manifestation of vanity.

The contents of *Robert Mornay* are just what might have been expected from its title-page. It is the book of a decidedly clever man. It shows an amount of literary ability which, with practice, might become considerable. It contains evidence of good intentions and good moral feeling on the part of the author, but it is much to be regretted that, after relieving his feelings by writing it, he did not put it in the fire and turn his mind to something more important and more wholesome. There is no fault to be found with the dish, except that it has come with the wrong butcher. The personage referred to on the title-page occasionally supplies meat as well as cooks.

The story of *Robert Mornay* is very short indeed. He is thirty years of age, rich, and lately discarded by a lady to whom he had been engaged. Staying at a friend's house in Italy, he falls in with a pretty Italian peasant girl, whom he does not seduce, though in an honourable sort of way (for he intended to marry her) he goes very near it, destroying her peace of mind by making love to her, and then giving her up because his friend's wife suggests that he may make up his quarrel with the first lady, and that it would be very unpleasant for her to find him married to an ignorant, uneducated foreigner. After some loitering about, and a prolongation of his quarrel with his original mistress, during which he writes a sceptical journal of which selections are published, Mornay marries the first lady, and the second is seduced by some one else, and drives about London as Madame de Sylvio in a very unequivocal brougham. The subordinate characters marry the women provided for them. The different scenes to which this slight plot—if it deserves such a name—gives occasion are sketched in a decidedly skilful and spirited manner; and if Max Ferrer chooses to devote himself entirely to literary pursuits, and knows, or can learn, how to construct a plot, he might probably do well as a novelist. This, however, is by no means the object which he has proposed to himself in *Robert Mornay*.

* *Robert Mornay*. By Max Ferrer. London: Chapman and Hall, 1859.

He aims, as people are apt to do when they publish their first novel, at something far higher than the orthodox three volumes. He has loaded his fowling-piece and put on his shooting-jacket not for the sake of a hare or two and a few brace of partridges, but for the liberation of Italy, the establishment of a constitutional Government in France, the defence of England against invasion, and a few other objects equally desirable, and just as likely to be attained by half-a-pound of powder and two pounds and a half of small shot as the solution, or at any rate the statement, of the great problems of this life and the next by the publication of a novel in one volume, half of which is occupied with love-making.

A few difficulties have occurred to the author of *Robert Mornay* respecting the world in which we live. Morality is not quite a simple thing. The Providential government of the world is a subject which is not altogether free from difficulty. Revealed religion in general may be viewed in a light which will more or less perplex the observer. Moreover, a rich man who has attained the age of thirty without even embarking in any serious pursuit—and who has spent his time partly in enjoying himself and partly in making desultory observations on a great variety of different subjects—may be supposed to be particularly likely to see anomalies in life, and to feel some difficulty in understanding that he and all his friends and acquaintances, with all their vices and follies, are proof of an all-pervading harmony in creation. What is a man to do who has made this surprising discovery? Various courses might be suggested, the propriety of which we will not discuss; but the starest, the feeblest, and the most pernicious of all is precisely that which has been adopted on the present occasion. "Put it all in a novel" is the suggestion which Max Ferrer has acted on—"draw a picture of this precious specimen of the human race. Give a full, true, and particular account of his feelings and experiences. That will relieve your mind, amuse your taste, interest and excite your feelings, give you a little literary credit, inform the public at large of something which they ought to know, and above all, commit you to nothing—for a man who writes a novel describes without discussing; he is not responsible for the opinions of his characters, he only states them without assent or dissent. He need not trouble himself to think out his own views, to draw the conclusions from his premisses, or even to ascertain whether he has any premisses at all." It is impossible not to feel that the little novels which so often peek at great subjects in the present day owe their origin to such considerations as these. Their popularity appears to us to be one of the greatest literary misfortunes of the day. They generally contain more or less good, and *Robert Mornay* contains a good deal. A high tone of honour and morality runs through it. The author is thoroughly ashamed of his hero. He sees that he is a very wretched, contemptible fellow, and makes no excuses for him. He describes his conduct towards his second mistress as extremely weak, self-indulgent, and unprincipled; he shows that the proper course for such a man to take is to devote himself to some of the solid, commonplace occupations of life and to hold his tongue about his thoughts and feelings; and all this is perfectly true. He also shows clearly enough that it is foolish and contemptible to live for nothing higher than rank, money, and personal enjoyment; and he perceives, with considerable insight into the character of those about him, how much fire and how great a depth of sentiment is often concealed under the impassible exterior which every educated Englishman assumes with a sort of enthusiastic coldness. All these good points set the author of the book in a very amiable light. It is impossible not to feel that individually he is probably worthy of respect and affection, but his book is very bad indeed. It is bad, not because it is wicked, but because it can hardly fail to be either useless or injurious. To call particular attention to the character of any person, either real or imaginary, is only justifiable when an object is to be gained by it. There are many men of whom it is not desirable to know much more than one is obliged to know. The heart of man is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things, and it is frequently just as well to have as little as possible to do with it in the absence of any specific reason for breaking through the rule. It can, we should think, do good to no man, woman, or child to know the secrets of such a person as Mornay as a mere matter of curiosity. The real mode of testing the morality of such a novel is to consider it as the biography of a real person, and to see whether on that hypothesis it ought to have been published. The author, we think, would, upon reflection, feel that if under such circumstances his own manuscript had been brought to him and his advice had been asked as to its publication, it would have been at least friendly and plausible advice to have said, "My dear Mornay, I cannot understand why you should take all the world into your confidence. If you had a sore leg, you would not think it desirable to go about in a kilt on purpose to show it to your neighbours. If some unseemly mess were spilt on the floor, you would have it wiped up and thrown away. Your life, by your own account has been, up to the present time, very bad, very commonplace, and very unsuccessful. You have arrived at no clear views of your relation either to this world or the next, if there is one, which you greatly doubt. You certainly have made up your quarrel with Mabel, and have married her; but you had better wait to see how the marriage turns out before you brag about it to all the world. Between ourselves, you may get into more scrapes with Italian girls; and your principles and

passions are in such a very indefinite state, that perhaps you may not find it easy to get out of them. You are a weak, flighty, substantially ignorant, unsettled person; and though you may do well enough hereafter, the less said about you at present the better for all parties."

If such advice would have been good to a real Robert Mornay, who had written a real autobiography, the application of it to Max Ferrer is that it is a great pity that he did not put his book in the fire before it was printed. At any rate, there is a strange inconsistency between the publication and the moral of the book. The moral is that a sceptical, unsettled man ought to hold his tongue and mind his own business. This is quite true; but the sceptic's friend, not to say creator, should practise what he preaches.

CHRISTIAN ORATORY.*

THE study of Patristic Theology has been subject to curious fluctuations in this country. In the days of Hammond and Usher, no theological treatise of any pretension could have passed current unless it bore evident marks of deep reading of the Fathers; and indeed Usher's extracts from them in foot-notes and side-notes are, to one who seeks no further, a large repertory of their doctrine and sentiments. The pages of Hooker, Barrow, and Jeremy Taylor, it need scarcely be added, indicate a fruitful knowledge of those depths of eloquence and lore. But we note a reaction. Archbishop Sharp of York used to say he owed his mitre to the Bible and Shakspeare, and certainly we search his sermons in vain for reference to the Fathers. The reader of the feeble and washy sermons of a century or a century and half ago becomes conscious of another and a baser standard; and perhaps the empty platitudes and high-sounding barrenness of that period may have contributed in part towards bringing about the general contempt into which our Church was falling, when the so-called Evangelicals arose to quicken the dying embers, and became, though certainly not the immediate cause of a revived study of the Fathers, yet a remote cause, in that they evoked the energies of the original authors of the *Tracts for the Times*. Whatever the faults of these last, neglect of the mines of Patristic literature was not one of them; and though now the perversion of certain leaders of the Tractarian party has left in narrow minds a prejudice against the Fathers, yet that they are very much more read than a quarter of a century ago publishers can best testify. By theological students, deserving the name, they must be read. They must be carefully studied by all who aspire to eminence in the ranks of the clergy; for eminence implies a position to be maintained, and the arms whereby it must be maintained are careful interpretation and eloquent delivery of Scriptural truth.

More or less the Fathers of the first five centuries supply these arms; and, as some of these fall very far short of others in orthodoxy, in eloquence, and in style, it seems at first sight not unwise in the Hulsean Trustees to have proposed the subject of "Christian Oratory in the First Five Centuries" for the annual prize in the University of Cambridge. But that the subject is unduly large, and that its requirements could only be adequately satisfied after a long life of study, are facts of which we suspect no one can feel more conscious than Mr. Moule himself; and, in truth, fair play demands that he should enjoy the credit of what he has done, while his omissions and contractions should be laid at the door of those who prescribed to the writer and his subject limits so unequal. A young student, however distinguished, can hardly do justice to the relative oratorical and general merits of some four-and-twenty Fathers, giving specimens of the style of each, and adding chapters respecting the causes of the prominence or non-prominence of oratory at various times within the prescribed period. He must often do injustice to one or another of those whom he is estimating, and often take his conclusions and specimens of eloquence at second-hand from others who have preceded him without the same restrictions of space and the same comparative inexperience. Milman, Neander, and even Waddington, have approached a like task at a maturer age without the trammels of an University exercise. And, this being so, perhaps Mr. Moule could not have done better than refer, as he has done, very much to these his forerunners in the work, and thus give a gentle hint, to those who set the subject, of the awkward character of its dimensions.

The introductory chapter touches upon the erroneous popular views of preaching, and shows that the supposed advantage on the score of art, of a dignified and moving theme, is in this case unfairly urged, since the very gravity of the subject-matter is too impressive for the requirements of mere art. Demosthenes and Cicero grasped the living present—Ambrose and Chrysostom dwelt upon the future. The former appealed to waking realities, the latter to dim and far-off visions. Spiritual addresses cannot fairly be compared with secular. The preacher's aim is different, his end being to save souls; and the necessity to his success of the moral element renders art a secondary consideration; besides which, he has rarely leisure for that intense application to the study of oratory to which the secular masters of eloquence in Athens or Rome devoted themselves so sedulously. And yet, since all the powers of the Christian are dedicated to God, the power of speech will be consecrated to the service of Christianity; and,

* *Christian Oratory: an Inquiry into its History during the First Five Centuries.* By Horace M. Moule, Queen's College, Cambridge. Cambridge and London: Macmillan. 1859.

not uncommonly, a "moral self-consciousness" loosens the tongue of the earnest preacher, and stands to him instead of the most systematic instruction in rhetoric.

In mapping out the space of time over which the essay extends, its author adopts Milman's four periods up to the death of Constantine—the first extending to the death of Nero (A.D. 68), the second to Trajan's accession (88), the third to the death of M. Aurelius, and the fourth to the establishment of Christianity as the State religion in 324. From this point, or rather from Constantine's death in 337, to the fall of the Western Empire in 476, he divides into four other periods, terminating, the first with the Division of the Empire (A.D. 364); the second with 395, the last year of Theodosius I.; the third with Genseric's landing in Africa in 429; and the fourth with the year of extinction, 476. The second chapter carefully reviews the history of these periods, and dwells at some length on the persecutions, as tending to throw light on the complicated conceptions which the later Fathers had of martyrdom, and as being the first distinct inspiration of a Christian literature. Now, as Mr. Moule eliminates from the list of persecutors all save M. Aurelius, Decius, Valerian, and Dioclesian—reserving for the first alone of these the title of a real and determined persecutor—we could have spared any delay on this outskirts of the main subject, had he seen fit to give up the pages so gained to some one or other Christian orator whom he has dismissed too summarily. A treatise of this size is hardly large enough for much collateral matter. A knowledge of it should be pre-supposed. When, besides the persecutions, the "heresies and schisms" and "the pagan schools of thought" have been surveyed, and the first five centuries finally distributed into the Apostolic, Philosophic or Mystic, and "Oratorical proper" periods, we find a fourth part of the volume completed, and the subject itself just opening. The detail, however, of the causes which, during the first two periods, kept oratory in the background as a means of extending the Church's influence without its pale, is pertinent and satisfactory. The singular conduct, the blameless life, and the constancy unto death of believers were more powerful than eloquence to convince hesitating minds; while, within the Church's pale, the dangers of assembling for worship, and the prior claims of reading the Scriptures, and of catechetical instruction, rendered the sermon of secondary importance. Another chapter on the "Antiquities of preaching" is compiled mainly from Riddle's *Christian Antiquities*; and from it we gather, among other things, that in the Latin Church the sermon lasted often not more than ten minutes. During its delivery the preacher sat, the hearers stood—which may perhaps suggest that brevity was so popular as to become imperative. Mr. Moule illustrates this variation of practice by the difference between the English and the Scotch, the latter of whom sit during the psalm or hymn, and stand at prayer. He should go into some Welsh churches to see varieties of usages quite as singular.

We differ from Mr. Moule's opinion that Milman and Neander rate too highly, as specimens of apostolic eloquence, St. Peter's sermons on the Day of Pentecost and at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, or that of St. Paul on Mars' Hill, of which he has analyzed Neander's paraphrase. True, the sermons, as we read them in Holy Writ, may be only the headings or chief topics of the addresses then delivered; but is there not, on what has come down to us, the impress of inspired oratory, which doubtless fired every sentence of each Apostle? And is it not fair to judge, especially on such ground, by the sample which is left to us? For force and vigour—and in the case of St. Paul, for erudition also—they stand so high, that even if they were not, as we venture to think they are, beyond the scope of comparison, they might bear the palm from other and later eloquence. And as to St. Paul's knowledge of Greek literature, judging from his birth at polished Tarsus, his Roman citizenship, and the general consent of authorities, we had rather err on Bentley's side than be right with Mr. Moule. Nor has he quite done justice to Clement of Rome and Polycarp. The extract from the former given in Conybeare's second *Bampton Lecture* (pp. 66, 67) is certainly eloquent and scriptural in the highest degree; and the true estimate of Clement is probably that of Waddington, who speaks of his Epistle as "containing many noble truths, flowing from a vigorous Christian spirit, in language never feeble and occasionally eloquent." The notice of these Apostolic Fathers is concluded by a quotation from Dean Conybeare, that "in reading Clement or Polycarp, we find them breathing a spirit so truly Apostolic as to make us almost feel the 'mantle' of St. Paul;" and by a remark thereon—"This is true of the *spirit*; but we miss the authority of inspiration in the language, and look in vain for human *style*." This is hard measure. Conybeare, in his very next paragraph, lays down very clearly in what light the Epistles alluded to should be regarded—disclaiming inspiration for them, but noticing how thoroughly they are imbued with Scripture in their modes of thought and expression. In a lower degree, then, their pretension to eloquence as compositions partakes, inspiration apart, of the claims of the Apostolic sermons and writings.

In a passing glance at the Philosophic or Mystic period, we tarry at the notice of Clement of Alexandria, from whose *λόγος, προτρεπτικός* our author exhibits passages translated by Bishop Kay and Dean Conybeare. The selections which he has made are judicious; but for a far better and fuller idea of the eloquence of this Father we refer the reader to a little book published by Pickering in 1844, and entitled *Christian Doctrine and Practice in the*

Second Century. The translations, in that volume, of Chapters 10 and 12 of the *Protreptic Discourse* are very good; and we could have wished that the author of the essay before us had given us one or two specimens of the curious general information with which Clement's works are interspersed. In the first chapter, for example, of the second book of the *Paedagogus*, there is a passage enumerating all the delicacies of the table which we might almost fancy we were reading from Athenæus. We must add that while the "quietism" of Clement of Alexandria is noticed, a line or two might also have called attention to other blemishes of his system—his adoption of *esoteric* and *exoteric* doctrine, and his notion that the devil had no personality, but was merely the sensual principle.

In the pages devoted to Origen we desiderate specimens from his Homilies, of which Scultetus said "Est namque videre in iis singulare concionandi artificium." But we entirely coincide with Mr. Moule as to the inconsiderateness of Coleridge's dictum that Origen was the only scholar and genius among the Church Fathers. To Tertullian our author ascribes energy and pregnant conciseness, whilst he deems him inferior to Cyprian in fluency and clearness. (Compare Milman, H. A. C. ii. 244.) We would supplement this estimate with Conybeare's addition to "great sententiousness" of "pointed irony." A fair specimen of the author's own powers of translation is to be obtained in his rendering of the criticism of Lactantius on Cyprian (Div. Inst. v. i. p. 459), only we object to the use of the word "exegesis," though localized at Oxford and Cambridge, in an English translation; and in p. 100 we do not much admire the translation of "præmonstrationes," "small specimen-models."

We are compelled to pass on to one of the most interesting chapters in the volume—that upon St. Chrysostom; and we do so with the less reluctance, because the eloquence of Ambrose lay chiefly in his confidence and vigour, and Basil and the Gregories were elegant sentimentalists, more or less feeble and timid. Jerome, whom Coleridge deemed "one of the three great Fathers in respect of theology," is dismissed without any specimen of his style by Mr. Moule. St. Chrysostom is, indeed, as the author remarks, a study for a lifetime; and it is becoming modesty in him to profess no more than to skirt the field of that great Father. We rejoice that he has given at least thirty pages to this master of oratory, with appropriate and copious illustration and translation. From a writer so voluminous as Chrysostom every student has a passage or two to parallel each which any other student puts forth; but, on the whole, the choice has been very judiciously made, and, unless the essay had dealt almost solely with him and St. Augustin (an ample field, be it observed, in themselves), this portion could scarcely have been better done. We point to the panegyric on Rome, from the 32nd Homily on the Epistle to the Romans, and the exhortation to his hearers to let the fruits of their hearing be seen in their bringing others into the fold (p. 142, 3), as specimens of vigorous and accurate translation. In noticing and illustrating St. Chrysostom's extempore allusions to passing matters (e. g., "The gleam of Sunshine" and "The Lighting of the Lamps") Mr. Moule has shown judgment, and supplied hints for the introduction of natural and justifiable "effect" into modern sermons. We have compared with the original the translated extract from the "Homily before going into exile," as well as three passages on "The priestly office," on "Fasting," and on "God's presence in the House." All are careful reproductions of Chrysostom in an English garb, and serve, as the translator wished, to illustrate at the same time the preacher's oratory and character. By the way, what are we to infer from the author's remark on the passage about Hannah's going up to the Temple to pray—"that there is no special virtue in the nature of a consecrated place as such, and that Chrysostom's discreet words on this topic have a living significance at the present day." The Father makes a reservation "if no house of prayer be near"—otherwise he would doubtless have enforced attendance at the House of God. It is just one of those services which are *generally necessary*—though of course, if you are in the backwoods, the shade of a tree or the broad canopy of heaven may fitly form a place of prayer and thanksgiving. Conybeare, in a note at p. 224 of his *Bampton Lectures*, rightly blames Clement of Alexandria for observing that his perfect exemplar of a Christian needs "no stated place or time of prayer, for to him every spot is consecrated, his whole life one continuous festival." And St. Chrysostom's Homily on Act. Apost. xviii., clearly lays it down that he would fain see churches built on *every* estate, so that there might be no lack of consecrated buildings for a holy worship. This little hit about "living significance in the present day" is an *ad captandum* touch, which we predict will be omitted should the volume reach a second edition. That it may do so is not impossible, for it is decidedly a "handy book" to the Fathers of the First Five Centuries; and there is a lack of such books. In such a case we should suggest compression of the earlier portion of the volume, so as to leave more room for the lights of the fourth century, and for the very interesting comparison of them with the preachers of modern Europe. In truth, a separate volume would not be too much for this comparison. Between Chrysostom and Demosthenes, for reasons stated above, any institution of a comparison is supererogatory; but the brief parallelism of Massillon, Bossuet, Jeremy Taylor, Robert Hall, and Irving with the old Fathers is so suggestive that we can but hope Mr. Moule may enlarge it.

Having early begun to study the Fathers, he has a golden opportunity for enriching the translated literature of this country; and it is no flattery to say that, if he would undertake the Epistles of Chrysostom, which Gibbon somewhere regrets are untranslated, he might safely be trusted with the task. It is commonly said that an English translation cannot do justice to St. Chrysostom. We doubt this; and, believing that the diligent study of his works would greatly improve our modern theology and sermon-writing, we should rejoice to welcome a practical proof of the contrary.

SCOTTISH LIFE AND CHARACTER.*

SCOTLAND has been characterized, or stigmatized, as producing humour, but not wit. Dean Ramsay, not without some patriotic indignation, disputes the imputation, at the same time professing himself to be unable to grasp the distinction. It is a real one, though it may be hard to define; and, at any rate, one point of the distinction is that on which Sydney Smith grounded his imputation that Scotchmen, though capable of saying shrewd, humorous, sarcastic, and "pawky" things, are insensible to the wit of others. What the Canon of St. Paul's said was, that "it requires a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scotch understanding;" and, probably, this has as much to do with the moral as with the intellectual character of the people. The Scotch, undoubtedly, have a keen eye to their own interests; and a selfish man would naturally attend more to what was going on in his own mind, than be quick to observe those resemblances in things dissimilar, and those grotesque coincidences and associations in which Aristotle seems to find at least one form of wit. Sydney Smith's wit—which was, for the most part, irony—must, moreover, have been especially opposed to the dry, practical, hard, matter-of-fact education of the Scottish mind. The canny men of the North would generally meet his paradox and fun with a dull mechanical estimate which must have been very provoking. Charles Lamb tells a story, illustrating his own opinion of the Scottish mind, which points in the same direction—a story which, by the way, with the true Scottish incapacity of catching a joke, Dean Ramsay, in the book before us, spoils in the telling. Lamb was asked to meet a son of Burns, who was late for dinner. The conversation, of course, turned on the poet's family, when Lamb said, "I wish it were his father who is coming." Two or three Scotchmen, with one voice, exclaimed, "That's impossible, for he's dead." Mr. Ramsay makes Lamb say, "I wish it had been his brother," &c.

The *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* has reached its third edition, and it deserves the honour. Mr. Ramsay writes with a pleasant garrulity, and with an intense feeling of the importance of his subject—the dignity and pathos of which occasionally carry him into the high sentimental latitudes—which are not unamusing. His object is to jot down rather than to analyse the landmarks of Scottish character and manners which are fast disappearing. The change is not confined to Scotland. National habits and peculiarities, like dialects, are fading away; and what Mr. Ramsay remarks of Scotland is true of Europe, and may perhaps be true of the world. The Union did much in this direction; but roads are the great levellers of the bumps and prominences of national life. Another century of railroads will probably efface every dialect in Great Britain; and a universal language is not quite the dream it was in Bishop Wilkins' days. Mr. Ramsay, in spite of his intense nationality, cheerfully admits that on the whole the rapid changes in Scottish life and manners in the middle and upper classes are much for the better. Less swearing, less drinking, less coarseness of life and feeling, are cheaply purchased at the loss of pawky sayings and of that shrewdness of tongue and sarcasm which often began and ended in selfishness. Dean Ramsay's volume is methodically divided; but the divisions "on Scottish religious feeling, old Scotch conviviality, old Scotch servants, Scotch proverbs, and Scotch wit and humour," often cross each other. Nevertheless, the book, though it comes into competition with Lord Cockburn's *Memoirs*, is very readable, and we shall perhaps give the best notion of it by making extracts.

In illustration of the Scotch taste for sermons on dogmatic divinity, and the pure marrow of speculative theology, Mr. Ramsay relates a good anecdote. One clergyman at least was in the habit of preaching on the distasteful and vulgar subjects of practical life and home morality; but an ancient dame, whose tastes lay in discussions on predestination and essays on free will, remarked on the preacher, "If there's an ill text in a' the Bible, that greetur's sure to tak it." Few tales better illustrate the fervour of Jacobite feeling than the following:—Mr. Stirling of Keir, a strong Stuartite, attended a secret meeting at the Brig of Turk, in 1708. The Government was very anxious to discover the leaders. Keir was suspected, but the miller of Keir swore positively and distinctly that the Laird was not present. As it was generally known that Keir was present, the witness was of course asked how he could swear to so downright a falsehood. "The miller, quite undaunted, and with a feeling of confidence in the righteousness of his cause approaching the sublime, replied, 'I would rather trust my soul to God's mercy than trust Keir's head to their hands'"—a piece of casuistry which, however

sublime, we trust will not cross the Border. A good many of the stories are about the Scotch religion and its ministers. The Dean, with very natural predilection, does not mind having a sly fling at his Presbyterian brethren; but we must do him the justice to say that none of his stories are ill-natured, and it is reasonable enough that Scotch humour should often find the old minister either the hero or the narrator of the story. Thus a minister in the north, returning thanks in his prayers one Sabbath for an excellent harvest, began as usual—"O Lord, we thank Thee," &c.; and went on to mention its abundance and its safe ingathering; but, feeling anxious to be quite candid and scrupulously truthful, he added—"all except a few fields between this and Stonehaven, not worth mentioning." A Scotch preacher being sent to a country parish, was accommodated in the manse, but in a very small closet. On inquiring, "Is this the bedroom?" he was answered, "Deed ay, sir, this is the prophet's chamber." "It maun be for the minor prophets, then." Speaking of these reminds us of an Oxford story. An undergraduate, "weak in his divinity," was asked, "Which are the minor prophets?" His reply was respectful to the authors of the Bible, but it was a respect which had evidently kept him at a distance from holy writ:—"Well, he did not like to draw distinctions." But we must return to Dean Ramsay's volume. Mr. Skirra, a seceding minister of Fife, expounding the 116th Psalm, came to the verse—"I said in my haste all men are liars;" and he added, not quite inaudibly, "Indeed, Dauvid, an' ye had been i' this parish, ye might have said it at your leasure." Another minister, engaged in visiting his flock, knocked at a door where his modest tap could not be heard for the noise of a violent quarrel within. After waiting a little, he opened the door, and walked in, and somewhat pompously inquired, "I should like to know who is the head of this house?" "Weel, sir, said the husband, if ye sit doon a wee, we'll maybe be able to tell ye, for we're just tryin' to settle that point." A young minister, dining after service with a farmer, found his appetite so keen that he thought it necessary to apologize to his host for his very substantial dinner, "You see, I am always very hungry after the preaching." The old gentleman, not thinking his pulpit performances very first-rate, having heard this apology two or three times, at last replied, "Deed, sir, I'm no surprised at it, considering the trash that comes aff your stomach in the morning." A lad went to the parish minister to be examined before his first communion. The minister, not wishing to discourage the boy, led off with a safe question: "How many commandments are there?" After some little thought, the lad cautiously and suggestively answered, "Aiblins a hunner." The minister, shocked at such intolerable ignorance, dismissed this promising catechumen. On returning home, the lad met another boy bound to the manse on the same errand. Notes were compared. "Weel, what will ye say, noo, if the minister speers hoo many commandments there are?" "Say! Why, I shall say ten, to be sure." "Ten! Try ye him wi' ten!" I tried him wi' a hunner, and he wasna satisfied." In the parish of Lunan existed a habit of sleeping in church, much to the minister's disgust, who on one unlucky Sunday afternoon endeavoured to stir up his hearers by an earnest oburgation, concluding with the pointed fact, "You see, even Jamie Fraser, the idiot (who was in the front gallery, wide awake), does not fall asleep, as many of you are doing." Jamie, not liking either the publicity or the designation, replied, "An' I hadna been an edeot, I wad ha' been sleeping too." Dr. Macknight, who compiled the *Harmony of the Gospels*, was thought by his country parishioners to waste his time on these learned labours. On going to Edinburgh to publish his book, the blacksmith was asked if the minister was at home. "Na; he's gane to Edinburgh on a vera useless job; he's gane to mak four men agree wha ne'er cast out." Another, far from a popular, and far from a brief, preacher, being asked, by way of hint of the intolerable length of his sermons, if he did not feel tired after such long preaching, replied, "Na, na, I'm no tired; but, Lord! hoo tired the fouk whiles are."

One of the most characteristic traits of Scotch, and indeed of all primitive society, is the simple and affectionate domestic relation between masters and servants, though the way in which these old household appendages protected the domestic interests was not always agreeable. A Mrs. Murray was among the guests at a dinner party, when the host observed that she was looking for a salt-spoon. The old servant, Thomas, was appealed to, with no answer. Again he was reminded—still no answer. At length he was addressed, "Thomas, Thomas, Mrs. Murray has no salt-spoon." To which he replied, "Last time Mrs. Murray dined here, we lost a salt-spoon." This humour of interference with the master's concerns was amusingly understood, and in a queer way rebuked, by an old lady, who, when she wanted a note to be delivered immediately, always summoned her servant Andrew and read the letter over to him. "There noo, Andrew, ye ken a' that's in't: noo, dinna stop to open it, but just send it off." The taste for gossiping in the kirkyard after service is illustrated in the following anecdote of Scotch servant-gal-ism. A lady, by way of favour, informed a lass on hiring that she should always go to church on Sunday, but that she was expected to come home immediately. With high religious feeling, the girl answered, "Na, na, I canna du that. I wadna gie the crack o' the kirkyard for a' the service"—an honesty nearly equal to that of the girl who on her marriage day was reminded by her gallant bridegroom—"Weel, Jenny, haven't I been unco ceevil?" alluding to the decorous fact that during their whole courtship he had never even

* *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character*. By E. B. Ramsay, M.A., F.R.S.E., Dean of Edinburgh. Third Edition, &c. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas. 1859.

given her a kiss. Her reply was, "Ou, ay, mon—senselessly ceevil."

Dean Ramsay's anecdotes of the bench are certainly not as many, nor nearly as good, as those of the pulpit. Here are, however, two:—At a dinner of Lord Polkemmet's, when the covers were removed, the fare consisted of veal broth, a roasted fillet of veal, veal cutlets, a florentine, a calf's head, and calf's foot jelly. The judge, observing the surprise of his guests, volunteered an explanation. "Ou, ay, it's a cauf: when we kill a beast, we just eat up ae side and down the tither." The same judicial worthy used to describe his mode of passing judgment, which we commend to the distinguished law lord who at present does honour to Scotland and the English Chancery. "Ye see, I first read a' the pleadings, and then, after letting them wamble in my wame wi' the toddy twa or three days, I gie my ain interlocutor."

We have quite forgotten our manners in giving the ladies the last place, but here is a set of little anecdotes which may be told even after Lord Cockburn's famous stories of a variety of womanhood peculiar to Scotland. We allude to those strong-headed, warm-hearted, and very plain-spoken old dames, of whom a rich and full-flavoured memory is all that survives. *Ex.grat.*, there was the honest old Fersfarsshire lady who, after a very positive disclaimer of some assertion attributed to her, was asked if she had not written as much, or something very like it—"Na, na, I never write anything of consequence; I may deny what I say, but I canna deny what I write." The Dean—and he is an authority—assures us that there was not the slightest irreverence in the old lady who on her death-bed, in reply to a friend who was hoping that she would soon enjoy some of their country spring butter, answered, "Spring butter! by that time I shall be buttering in heaven." When really dying, she overheard one of the friends round her bed remark, "Her face has lost all colour: it grows like a sheet of paper." "It must be brown paper, then," replied the dying old lady, the ruling passion strong upon her. A strong-minded lady of this class was inquiring the character of a cook she was about to hire. The lady who was giving the character entered a little upon the cook's moral qualifications, and described her as a very decent woman, to which the astounding reply—this was sixty years ago—was, "Oh, d—n her decency: can she make good collops?" This is not bad. But we conclude with a better. A Montrose lady, aged and single, demurred to some local tax; and the Provost kindly called to explain matters, and alluding to his bachelor days, observed, "I assure you, ma'am, when I was in your situation I had to pay." "In my situation," was the scornful reply; "in my situation; and pray when were ye in my situation—an auld maid, living in a flat wi' an ae lass?"

THE THREE ARCHBISHOPS.*

WHEN we last summer became acquainted with the name of Mr. Washington Wilks as an offender against the dignity of the House of Commons, we little imagined that we should speedily meet with him again in a very different character. Here he is, however, as joint author of a volume entitled *The Three Archbishops: Lanfranc—Anselm—à Becket*; and we approached it with all the awe naturally inspired by a man who has bearded Mr. Speaker in his chair—who, in defence of the liberty of the press, has endured with defiant constancy the rack of interrogation by incensed honourable members, and the dungeon of the serjeant-at-arms. We did not venture even to doubt the propriety of the title, although it seemed to suggest that Canterbury is the only archiepiscopal see in Christendom, and that its history is limited to the century immediately after the Norman conquest; and we proceeded to the Preface with a reverential desire to profit by the wisdom and the knowledge of the great Carlisle editor.

In the second page of the preface, however, we met with matter which considerably staggered us. "The times of Gregory the Sixth and Hildebrand," it is said, "of Urban the First and Urban the Second, of the Pope and Antipope, of the Council of Clermont, were times of great importance in the history of the growing power of the Roman bishops." As Gregory the Sixth was but one of three (or perhaps four) rival popes—as his pontificate (such as it was) lasted but a few months, and ended in his deposition by the Emperor—we were at a loss to understand how it could be characterized as "important in the history of the growing power" of the papacy; and our ideas of chronology were considerably shocked by finding that Gregory (deposed in 1046) was placed after the battle of Hastings. But still more startling is the mention of Urban the First, whom our authors transfer from the early part of the third century to the latter half of the eleventh. Was it possible, we began to think, that Mr. Washington Wilks and his partner might be nothing more than very ordinary bookmakers? Alas! such is indeed the fact. The preface is but a fair sample of the whole; and the thoroughly bookmaking spirit comes out in a manner not to be mistaken as soon as we enter on the body of the work. Here is the opening, which reads like a bit of one of Mr. James's novels:—

CHAPTER I.—*Night and Morning.*—Towards the close of a day in the year 1042, a young man was descending a slope of country lying between Avranches and the Norman city of Rouen. It was bounded on the south and most elevated part by a wood, and on the north by a valley, through

which ran a small stream, giving its name to the neighbourhood. He had not long left the wood, and was nearly two miles from the valley before him, when he was suddenly attacked by robbers, who violently bound his hands behind him, and tied his capuce, or loose cloak, before his eyes; then, having taken all he had about him, they led him back to the wood, where they left him to bemoan his fate.

In a condition so unenviable and hopeless, nothing was left him but, &c. &c.

The unfortunate young man, of course, is Lanfranc; but we find ourselves cruelly disenchanted when, in the second chapter, before expounding the archbishop's birth, parentage, and education, our authors express a disbelief of the story which they had before told without any hint of doubt as to its truth. It may, however, be some comfort to the simple reader to be assured that, as there is nothing at all improbable in the tale, so it has been generally accepted by writers who, in learning and judgment, are at least equal to Messrs. Wilks.

The first chapter brings out another characteristic of our authors—viz., the style of their references. At the end of it is this note:—"Vit.: Lanfr.: Mil.: Crisp.: D'Achery, Paris;" which means, we presume, the *Life*, by Milo Crispin, included in D'Achery's edition of Lanfranc's works; but the reference would probably be more puzzling than instructive to any reader who might be unacquainted with the old biographer. In the next chapter, indeed, he is quoted more distinctly; but we are startled by a reference to Orderic, without any specification of the place in his voluminous history for which it is intended; and by such references as "Berington, *Histor. Liter.*, Book iv."—"See Berington, Giessler [*sic*], and others quoted by them"—"See notes to Bulwer's *Harold*"—"Will. Gem." (without any hint where William of Jumièges is to be found, or what part of his chronicle is meant)—and so on. It is clear that nobody ever will take the trouble of trying whether he can "see" the passages cited where the citation is so vague; and we think that our authors have shown discretion in almost wholly omitting references throughout the latter part of their work.

The labour of collecting materials has not pressed heavily on Messrs. Wilks. Their knowledge of the old historians appears to be pretty much limited to some of the translations published by Mr. Bohn. Among later writers they show no acquaintance with books so well known as Lappenberg's *History of England*, Dean Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Professor Willis' *Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral*, or even Professor Stanley's papers on Becket; and although there is one reference to Dr. Pauli's continuation of Lappenberg, the circumstance that there is but one, and that the book is cited by an imaginary title, suggest the suspicion that this reference has not been derived from any immediate knowledge of the German historian's elaborate and valuable work.

We need hardly say that in a book put together with so little labour, blunders of all sorts abound. But the most serious evil which has arisen from the want of original study is this—that the authors are at the mercy of theoretical writers, who have pushed their inquiries further. Sometimes it is M. Thierry's fixed idea as to the antagonism of Saxons and Normans that imposes on them; sometimes it is Mr. Froude's high Anglican Hildebrandism, sometimes Dr. Lingard's specious Romanism; but whatever it be, and whether prompted by some party interest or by the mere spirit of speculation, the biographers of the three archbishops have no means of investigating its truth, and thus are carried away by opinions which they could hardly have adopted if they had brought them to the test of independent inquiry. Hence the book may really be mischievous; for, while it must look for its readers to the customers of circulating libraries, it may find among them many silly young ladies and gentlemen who will draw from it suggestions or encouragements for all manner of folly. And we regret this the more because the writers really appear to be desirous of estimating things fairly—without either an undue disparagement of the Middle Ages, or a paradoxical devotion to them—although unhappily their good intentions are defeated by their want of information.

The preface does not explain what are the respective shares of the authors in the volume. But we suspect that the *Life of Becket* is by a different hand from the others; and in respect of penmanship this would seem to have been a very bad hand indeed. The *Life* abounds with mistakes which might be excused in the printer, if he had to deal with an ill-written manuscript, although we may rightly complain that nobody has taken the trouble to correct them. These misprints occur not only in proper names, such as *Ootonuncia* for *Ootonumini* (or more properly *Ootonummi*), *Olleford* for *Oxford*, *Forlaise* for *Falaise*, *Pontion* for *Poitou*, and *Boshaen* for *Bosham*; but we have *ante regis* for *aula regis*, *vanity* for *rarity*, *instructive* for *instinctive*, *vigorous* for *rigorous*, *vows* for *arms*, *those poor priests* for *three poor priests*, *home* for *Rome*, *statistics* for *statutes*, *pleasing* for *plenary*, and a multitude of other errors which we might correct in like manner, besides some which defy our conjecture, and render the understanding of the author's meaning hopeless. Sometimes, indeed, we are unable to say whether a word which seems to be nonsense ought to be considered as a misprint or as an elegance above our apprehension—for example, the word *crests* in the following passage, which may be taken as a specimen of the biographer's more eloquent flights:—

A hundred years have elapsed between the coronation of William and the rise of Gilbert à Becket. . . . The city, whose crests are enriched by the produce of all climes, defends its liberties by sons adopted from all races; from the loins of a citizen of Rouen and a princess of the Orient, is born in its

* *The Three Archbishops: Lanfranc—Anselm—à Becket*. By Washington and Mark Wilks. London: R. W. Bennett. (No date.)

streets one destined to serve in its sheriff's offices, and to curb, from the high altar, the power of its foes.

It is perhaps useless to remark that the period which is here reckoned at a hundred years was in reality only fifty; that the prefix to Becket's name is a vulgar error; that it is very doubtful whether the archbishop's father was ever a citizen of Rouen (although his family was certainly Norman); that the legend which makes his mother a Saracen does not represent her as a princess, while it is unquestionably an utter fable; that it is strange to speak of a Lord Mayor's son as born "in the streets;" and that, in so far as we are aware, among Becket's many denunciations "from the high altar," not one was directed against the foes of the city of London. Eloquence must be allowed to carry everything before it!

There is, however, philosophy as well as eloquence; and, lest we should be charged with overlooking any of the biographer's gifts, here is a specimen of it:—

Promotion by favour is usually considered the antithesis of promotion by merit. The fitter antithesis would be promotion by privilege. Autocracy is as little interested as democracy in the repression of lowborn ability. It is under the government of the few—whether calling itself by the pompous misnomer *aristocracy*, or made justly odious by the designation *oligarchy*—that the natural rights of intellect, and the paramount necessities of the public service are systematically sacrificed to considerations of private, family, or party interest. Hence the frequency and conspicuousness of great names in the annals of absolutely despotic and of absolutely free states—their comparative paucity in those of mixed monarchies and quasi-republics, the nurseries of mediocrity, the prison-houses of genius.

Surely Mr. Carlyle, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Congreve, M. Louis Blanc, and even Sir Francis Palgrave himself, will quarrel as to the amount of their respective shares in forming the mind of a political philosopher so grandly superior to all considerations of fact! We must, however, in justice, say that, except where the writers attempt to be fine, the book is pleasantly enough written; and however trumpery we may consider it, in one respect it may be taken as a proof that a great reproach against our national literature is in course of being removed. For who can say that Englishmen are disposed to neglect church history when the editor of a Liberal country newspaper turns, in his leisure hours, from noisy politics and local squabbles, to employ himself in the manufacture (however indifferent) of a volume of ecclesiastical biography?

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